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ABSTRACT

This sourcebook assembles the results of research on educating homeless students and offers classroom strategies for people working with homeless students, providing training tools to strengthen programs and practices in schools and shelters. Chapter 1, "Increasing Awareness about Students Experiencing Homelessness," defines homelessness, describes its causes and impact on children and youth, and offers suggestions for raising awareness of the situation. Chapter 2, "Overcoming Barriers," identifies school enrollment and attendance hurdles that homeless families with children face most frequently, offering strategies to promote better access to schooling. Chapter 3, "School and Classroom Practices That Work," describes curricular, instructional, behavior management, and life skills activities that foster educational, social, and personal success. Chapter 4, "Not Schools Alone," describes the values of schools, families, and communities working together, suggesting ways to partner to support homeless people. Chapter 5, "Planning Presentations and Workshops," offers a set of sample agendas for various types of presentations and workshops to increase community awareness of homelessness. Chapter 6, "References, Resources, and Curricula," lists background materials, children's books, curricula, videos, and online resources for additional information and training tools. Each chapter provides examples of materials and activities, including overheads and handouts. (SM)

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ED 463 335

Imagine the Possibilities

Sourcebook for Educators Committed to the Educational Success of Students Experiencing Homelessness

BethAnn Berliner
Northern California Comprehensive Assistance Center,
WestEd

in partnership with

California Department of Education

Southern California Comprehensive Assistance Center,
Los Angeles County Office of Education

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Acknowledgments

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Foreword

Every night in America, even in this time of unparalleled abundance, an estimated 750,000 school-age children experience homelessness. With no home, these children and their families struggle for basic needs — food, shelter, and safety. Many are denied even the simplest pleasures of childhood: playing, making friends, or being cared for by trusted adults. Given the chaos and fear in their lives, it is no wonder that homeless children and youth face discouraging barriers to academic success.

Solving homelessness will require us to address our economic system and the distribution of central resources, such as housing, education, and good jobs. While we work to address these issues in all of their complexity, there are effective approaches we can take to support the healthy development and academic success of school-age homeless children. This publication offers us some important steps in that direction.

Imagine the Possibilities uniquely assembles the results of available research on educating homeless students and provides classroom strategies that work. It offers training tools that promise to strengthen programs and practices in schools and shelters.

It is a comprehensive sourcebook. Provided here is information about the nature and impact of homelessness; explanations about enrollment and attendance policies and procedures; guidance about effective curriculum, instruction, assessment, behavior management, and the promotion of healthy development; plus training materials and activities for educators, shelter workers, social service professionals, parents, and volunteers.

Imagine the Possibilities describes compellingly the impact of homelessness on American education. It also offers suggestions for working with poor and highly mobile students — suggestions that we expect will result in greater achievement and, for all of them, a more hopeful future.

Glen H. Harvey
Chief Executive Officer
WestEd

Imagining Possibilities — An Introduction

HOMELESSNESS MEANS MORE THAN LACKING A PERMANENT HOME. For the estimated 750,000 school-age children who live in shelters, cars, parks, abandoned buildings, door stoops, or with other families, it can mean growing up with a future dimmed by an "abundance of nothing."

Without a safe and stable place to call home, children lose contact with family and friends, are frequently uprooted from school, have few belongings that link them to their past, and experience shame. Without a place to call home, attending school often gives way to the more basic and urgent needs to secure shelter, food, and safety. As several hundreds of thousands of school-age children transfer in and out of schools each year, educators are challenged to design, carry out, and assess learning opportunities for students experiencing homelessness. Because of the chaos homelessness causes, students may be in a classroom for just a few days or a few weeks, they may lack critical gateway knowledge and skills, they may need specialized services, and they may exhibit a host of behaviors associated with trying to cope with uncertainty. For educators dedicated to ensuring better access to schooling and educational success for these students, this sourcebook offers research-based information and practical strategies to effectively teach students who don't have a home and to support their families during trying times.

Imagine the Possibilities brings together current research and classroom wisdom to create a sourcebook that presents good ideas currently working to make school success real for *all* students. It's both an information resource and compendium of training materials and activities, offering ready-to-use training tools for classroom teachers and others who work with homeless students, including school secretaries, site administrators, district or county office staff, school nurses, counselors, school board members, shelter workers, and volunteers.

Educators and others who work with homeless students have long asked for a sourcebook to turn to for information and training tips. *Imagine the Possibilities* is the first of its kind, a sourcebook that aims to increase student access to school as well as to improve student performance once there. Its goals are to

- increase the confidence, knowledge, and abilities of those who teach and support students experiencing homelessness;
- provide professional development activities that stimulate thoughtful improvements in school policies and procedures, instructional strategies, learning activities, and management techniques for students experiencing homelessness; and
- encourage educators and others who work with homeless students to continue to develop practical and effective ways to promote student academic, social, and personal success.

Imagine the Possibilities comprises six chapters:

Chapter 1: Increasing Awareness about Students Experiencing Homelessness defines homelessness, describes its causes and impact on the lives of children and youth, and offers suggestions for raising awareness among the community, educators, school personnel, and parents.

Chapter 2: Overcoming Barriers identifies school enrollment and attendance hurdles that homeless families with children most frequently face and offers strategies to promote better access to schooling.

Chapter 3: School and Classroom Practices That Work shows that there are curricular, instructional, behavior management, and life skills that foster educational, social, and personal success, and offers strategies that work for students experiencing homelessness.

Chapter 4: Not Schools Alone describes the value of schools, families, and community groups working together, and suggests ways to partner to better support homeless children, youth, and families.

Chapter 5: Planning Presentations and Workshops offers a set of ready-to-use sample agendas for various types of presentations and workshops that can also be customized for specific audiences and delivery times.

Chapter 6: References, Resources, and Curricula lists background materials, children's books, curricula, videos, and online resources for additional information and training tools.

Chapters 1 through 4 each present

- research-based information about specific issues related to educating children and youth experiencing homelessness;
- validated and promising strategies, as well as other good ideas, to help educators and social service providers better educate and support children and youth experiencing homelessness; and
- a set of ready-to-use training materials and activities that correspond to the specific issues and strategies addressed in each chapter.

Chapter 5 organizes the training materials and activities into sample agendas that consider different audiences, delivery times, delivery styles, and levels of the presenter's knowledge base. The sample agendas are not intended to be prescriptive — they were constructed to be suggestive. Our goal is to help professionals short on time to prepare for presentations and workshops. The agendas can also guide those drawn to self-study, providing shortcuts through the sourcebook to target their interests.

We hope you find this sourcebook informative and will put it to good use.

Chapter 1: Increasing Awareness about Students Experiencing Homelessness

THE NEW FACE OF HOMELESSNESS IS THAT OF A CHILD. More than 750,000 school-age children and youth don't experience the nurturance and safety of a home. They live in motels, homeless shelters, and shelters for families fleeing domestic violence. They live in cars, under freeways, hidden in abandoned buildings, in parks or on door stoops, and with relatives or friends "doubled up," desperately trying to make ends meet. Families with children are the fastest growing segment of the homeless population. Since 1991, the number of children experiencing homelessness has more than doubled, and many are never counted because their families move frequently, try to live invisibly, and avoid authorities for fear of losing custody of their children.

Defining Homelessness

Homelessness is the absence of a permanent place to call home. A homeless person is defined as follows in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act:

- an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and
- an individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is
  - a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill);
  - an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or
  - a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

This definition may refer to families, children, and youth who reside in dwellings lacking water, electricity, or other basic services; in transitional units, hotels, motels, or other emergency shelters; in campgrounds, parks, or other public spaces; or "doubled up" with other families in crowded and temporary arrangements.

Furthermore, a "fixed residence" is defined as stationary, permanent, and not subject to change. A "regular" residence is used nightly. And an "adequate" residence meets the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments.

The U.S. Department of Education recommends that states and school districts determine on a case-by-case basis the relative permanence of a child's residence. In general, children or youth living on the streets or in welfare hotels, transitional housing shelters, cars, abandoned buildings, and other inadequate accommodations are considered homeless.

The Causes of Homelessness

Families experience homelessness for many different reasons, including

- lack of affordable housing or eviction;
- unemployment, underemployment, or seasonal work;
- fleeing domestic violence;
- experiencing a disaster such as fire, flood, tornado, hurricane, or earthquake;
- catastrophic physical or mental illness; and
- debilitating substance abuse.

Homeless youth, those unattached to their families, may become homeless for different reasons, including

- fleeing family sexual, physical, and mental abuse;
- being thrown out of the family home;
- being gay or lesbian;
- being pregnant;
- resisting family rules; and
- fleeing family substance abuse.

The Impact of Homelessness

All homeless children share two things in common — they lack a permanent residence and they live, often invisibly, in extreme poverty. With this comes the disruption of stable family routines, the dissolution of social networks, the displacement of not having a home, the fear of living in shelters and other temporary places, and the anxiety of an uncertain future.

Homelessness compromises the health and well-being of children and youth. Compared to their housed classmates, children and youth experiencing homelessness are more likely to

- suffer from chronic illnesses, live in unhealthy or unsafe environments, receive delayed treatment for injuries and illnesses, lack preventive and routine medical care, and experience chronic hunger;

- develop serious emotional problems, experience somatic and stress disorders, and express intense fear and frustration through anger, self-blame, indifference, regression, and hopelessness;
- live in chronic and extreme poverty, worry about their parents, witness and experience family violence, and enter the foster care system; and
- acquire developmental delays and learning disorders, not attend school, experience academic problems, and repeat a grade and be suspended for poor attendance and behavioral issues.

Understanding Homelessness and Ways to Increase Awareness

Raising awareness about homelessness is critical to ensure that homeless students are identified in the community, enrolled in school, attending school regularly, and succeeding at their studies. Lack of knowledge, insensitivity, and denial that homelessness exists in school communities all contribute to enrollment delays, inadequate services, and the further isolation of children and youth without a home. There are a number of ways to help others better understand homelessness:

1. Raising Community Awareness

School-based and school-linked programs to assist homeless families rely upon their community's understanding of local homelessness and sense of urgency and responsibility to develop, fund, and deliver services to meet family needs. To generate support, community members need accurate and complete information about the causes and conditions that underlie homelessness and its impact on the children who are entitled to attend local schools. They need information about local and regional prevalence rates; the living conditions children and youth endure; the availability of support services; enrollment and attendance rates; legal rights and responsibilities of schools and families; and the social, emotional, physical, educational, and basic needs of children experiencing homelessness.

What Works

- ✔ Forming and participating in local task forces that address the needs of homeless families.
- ✔ Visiting homeless shelters and other places where homeless children and youth live.
- ✔ Presenting general awareness information at local and state public events.
- ✔ Meeting with civic leaders and organized civic groups.
- ✔ Disseminating general awareness information via flyers, brochures, billboards, bus panels, and radio and television spots.

2. Raising Educators' Awareness

To work effectively with highly mobile students, teachers need to be sensitized to their circumstances and have accurate and comprehensive information about homelessness in general. They need a strong understanding of the conditions in which homeless children live; their limited exposure to schooling and the diminished social, physical, and intellectual development they often experience; how to foster connections to learning activities and friendships in the classroom; and ways to facilitate continuity of schooling during school transitions.

What Works

- ✔ Distributing information about emergency and long-term local, regional, state, and national resources for homeless families.
- ✔ Offering presentations and workshops that focus on general awareness information, the rights and responsibilities of schools and families (i.e., McKinney Act provisions, Title I resources), and providing for the basic needs of homeless students (i.e., clothing, school and hygiene supplies, meals, transportation).
- ✔ Offering presentations and workshops on topics related to teaching and learning: curriculum and instructional strategies that work with highly mobile students, creating a school climate that welcomes all students, tutoring and remediation, and after-school and enrichment programming.
- ✔ Visiting homeless shelters and other places where homeless children and youth live.
- ✔ Distributing fact sheets, sample curricula, information bulletins, and school procedures manuals.

3. Raising School Personnel's Awareness

To work effectively with highly mobile students and their families, school secretaries, bus drivers, school custodians, and other site and district personnel need to be sensitized to their circumstances and have accurate and comprehensive information about homelessness in general. They need a strong understanding of the conditions in which homeless children live, the legal rights and responsibilities of schools and families, site-level procedures, and specific strategies to meet family needs.

What Works

- ✔ Distributing information about emergency and long-term local, regional, state, and national resources for homeless families.
- ✔ Offering presentations and workshops that focus on general awareness information, the rights and responsibilities of schools and families (i.e., McKinney Act provisions, Title I resources), and providing for the basic needs of homeless students (i.e., clothing, school and hygiene supplies, meals, transportation).

- ✔ Visiting homeless shelters and other places where homeless children and youth live.
- ✔ Organizing opportunities for school personnel and community service providers to become acquainted and to coordinate their services.
- ✔ Distributing fact sheets and school procedures manuals.

4. Raising Homeless Parents' Awareness

Parents of school-age children and youth experiencing temporary or long-term homelessness may be unaware of the resources available to them and of their family rights to and responsibilities for their children's education.

What Works

- ✔ Providing all printed informational materials in the native languages of the local homeless populations.
- ✔ Sending a school liaison to shelters and other places homeless families live to inform parents of their rights and resources.
- ✔ Giving parents transportation vouchers to attend school meetings.
- ✔ Operating a toll-free phone service that will answer questions about enrollment, immunization, school choice, transportation, and resources; and advertising the toll-free service using radio and television public service announcements.
- ✔ Presenting information to homeless families in partnership with service providers they trust, such as shelter workers, health clinic workers, and other community advocates.

MATERIALS & ACTIVITIES

Chapter 1: Increasing Awareness about Students Experiencing Homelessness

All Children Have Basic Needs

"Schools can't ignore POVERTY.... If basic needs are not met, learning cannot take place, no matter how hungry children are for knowledge."

From: Posnick-Goodwin, S. "Schools Can't Ignore Poverty," *California Educator,* May 1999.

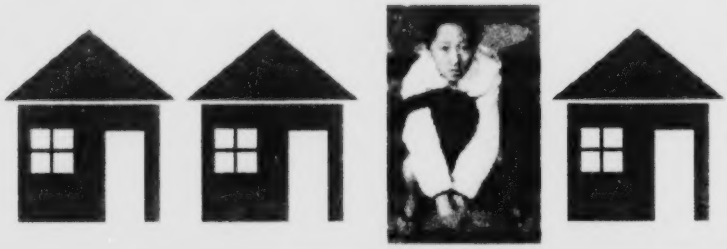
OVERHEAD

All Homeless Children Share Two Things

1. They lack a permanent residence.

2. They live in extreme poverty.

OVERHEAD



Who Is a Homeless Student?

- A school-age child who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; or
- A school-age child who has a primary nighttime residence that is any of the following:
  - a shelter
  - temporary institutional residence
  - makeshift arrangements in someone else's home
  - a place not designed for human accommodations

Adapted from the *McKinney-Vento Act*

OVERHEAD

According to the McKinney-Vento Act

"The Education of Homeless Children and Youth program is to ensure that all homeless children and youth have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including preschool education, provided to other children and youth."

From the *McKinney-Vento Act*

OVERHEAD

Rights

Homeless children and youth have the following rights:

- Free and appropriate public education
- Services comparable to those offered to non-homeless children and youth, including transportation
- Choice to remain in their school of origin or transfer to a school in their current attendance area
- Enrollment in school despite the lack of a permanent address or the lack of school records

FACTSHEET

Health and Well-Being

Homeless children are more likely than other children to experience the following:

- Suffer from chronic illnesses, live in unhealthy or unsafe environments, receive delayed treatment for injuries and illnesses, lack preventive and routine medical care, and experience chronic hunger.
- Develop serious emotional problems; experience somatic and stress disorders; and express intense fear and frustration through anger, self-blame, indifference, regression, and hopelessness.
- Live in chronic and extreme poverty, worry about their parents, witness and experience family violence, and enter the foster care system.
- Acquire developmental delays and learning disorders, not attend school, experience academic problems, repeat a grade, and be suspended for poor attendance and behavioral issues.

FACTSHEET

How Homelessness Happens to Families

Some reasons families become homeless:

- Lack of affordable housing
- Eviction
- Fleeing domestic violence
- Experiencing a natural disaster
- Substance abuse
- Divorce
- Accidental death of parent
- Physical or mental illness
- Unemployment, underemployment, seasonal work

FACTSHEET

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How Homelessness Happens to Youth

Some reasons youth become unattached to families and subsequently become homeless:

- Resisting family rules
- Being gay or lesbian
- Being pregnant
- Fleeing family substance abuse
- Being thrown out of the family home
- Fleeing family sexual, physical, or mental abuse

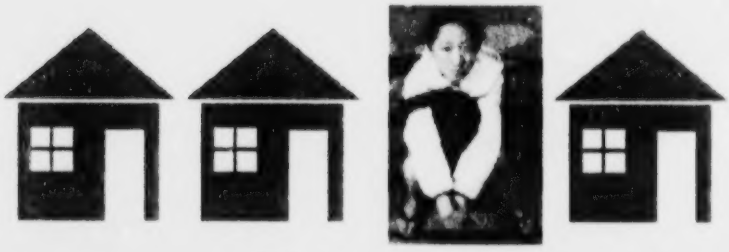
FACTSHEET

Where Homeless Children Sleep

Places where children may be forced to sleep because they lack a home:

- Homeless shelters
- Domestic violence shelters
- Hotels and motels
- Under bridges or overpasses
- Churches
- Cars
- On the streets
- Transitional housing
- Campgrounds and parks
- "Doubled up" with friends or family
- Abandoned or dilapidated buildings

FACTSHEET



Signs of Homelessness

The following are signs that a child may be homeless:

Physical Signs

- Chronic hunger, hoarding of food
- Poor grooming and hygiene
- Fatigue and inability to concentrate
- Chronic health problems

Emotional Signs

- Shame, low self-esteem
- Extreme shyness, nervousness, or withdrawal
- Anger, aggression
- Marked change in behavior to include any of the above
- Difficulty establishing relationships and building trust

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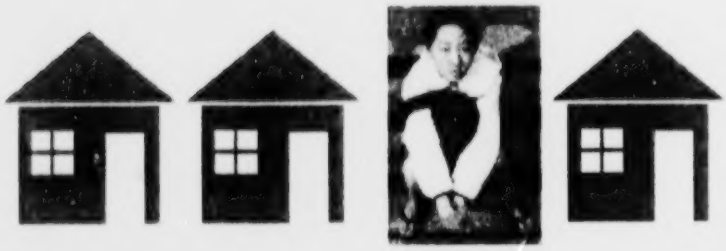
TIPSHEET



Other Signs

- Lack of clean clothes and school supplies
- Frequent absence, tardiness, change of schools
- Consistently unprepared: no homework, books, papers requiring signature
- Talk about staying with grandparents, other relatives, friends, or in a motel
- Talk about taking care of parents or siblings

Associated Risky Behaviors

- Involvement with drugs or alcohol
- Promiscuity

Experiencing Homelessness

Conditions homeless children are more likely than other children to experience:

- Chronic illness
- Serious emotional problems
- Extreme and chronic poverty
- Difficulty trusting people
- Chaotic family lives
- No place to do homework
- Fear of abandonment, need to feel secure
- Difficulties adjusting to a new school
- Being teased or shunned by other students
- Feeling ashamed of where they live
- Moving again, soon
- No school records
- Developmental delays and learning disorders

FACTSHEET

Things to Ask Yourself (and Others) If You Suspect a Child Is Homeless

- Is the child sent to school in the same outfit for more than two days?
- Does the child refrain from making reference to his/her bedroom at home?
- Does the child have a history of irregular school attendance?
- Does the child talk excessively about food?
- Has the child changed schools often in the last school year?
- Does the child consistently fail to complete homework?
- Does the child excessively fantasize about growing up, becoming rich, and/or helping others?
- Is the child familiar with age-inappropriate subjects?
- Has the child ever mentioned that parents use alcohol or other drugs?
- Has the child ever mentioned living with another family or in a motel or shelter?
- Does the child exhibit any unusual behavior?

TIPSHEET

Questions for School Personnel

- How many children at your school reside in homeless family shelters, domestic violence shelters, hotels or motels, cars, local parks, or garages?
- What are the names of the shelters in your attendance area that send children to you? What are the names of the shelter directors?
- How can you assist a family to enroll in your school if they've lost the child's birth certificate or immunization records and don't remember the name of the child's last school?
- How does your school reach out to homeless parents to include them in school programs and services?
- What is the average length of stay at your school for children experiencing homelessness?
- How do you track homeless students when they leave your school?
- What kind of training do staff members receive about the special needs of homeless children?

TIPSHEET

Message from a Homeless Child All Grown Up

Today, as an adult no one would ever guess that I was once a homeless child. I have a family of my own, a successful career, and I own my own home. They say I'm resilient and adaptive, but there is more to it than that. Let me share with you what homelessness felt like as a child, and some of the things that people — often teachers — did for me that made a tremendous difference in my life.

I never lived in a homeless shelter. We moved frequently. Some nights we slept in the back of a pickup truck, other nights in an abandoned house, and I lived most comfortably "doubled up" with other families. My longest stay was in a home with 14 people — two bedrooms and one bathroom. I slept in the living room by the front door, along with five other children. At least it was warm.

When life is so uncertain, you find yourself wanting to control anything you possibly can. This often can lead to outward aggression or withdrawal. I experienced both at different times. Chronic hunger can lead to hoarding food, because there may not be any food tomorrow, so you'd better grab what you can now. Separation from people you love and possessions is sometimes unbearable. I reached a point where the pain of leaving friends was just too much, so I decided making friends was a bad idea. It was so hard to change schools — especially in the middle of the year. In some places the teacher had someone show me around. In others I felt invisible. It wasn't easy showing up in ugly clothes that didn't fit, but at least they were clean (most of the time). I think I took fifth-grade health four times, but never learned any social studies that year, because each school I went to was teaching in a different order. I sure knew how my food was getting digested, but I didn't care. I just wanted to get something to eat.

When I think back about why I ended up where I am, and why other children sharing that same living room have not been so fortunate, I realize that I found anchors to hold on to. When I say anchors, I mean people who meant something to me, who said just the right things at the right time. These anchors were most often teachers.

Teachers can be so powerful in the eyes of a child, and don't even realize it. When life is so chaotic, teachers seem to be the only stable adults in your life you have to look up to. My mother meant well, but she had her hands full just trying to keep us fed. I had one teacher actually give me a picture of herself, a letter reminding me that I could be anything I wanted to be, and her address to write to her any time. I never wrote, but I carried her picture and her letter with me from place to place. I had other teachers just take a couple of minutes to talk with me about life — many of them expressed the importance of a good education, and that a strong education was my way out of poverty. They said I was smart, they said I was special, and they said I had the ability to do whatever I wanted to if I focused on it. I believed them. They gave me hope and they showed me that they cared, and that's what made the difference.

Their words were always with me. I knew drugs and alcohol were a dead end and education was the key. They were right. Thank you to all the teachers out there who truly care about their students. Although you may often feel unheard, your words are not falling on deaf ears.

Fondly,
Adele Walker, MA

Myths and Facts about Homelessness

Myth 1: **The homeless are primarily middle-aged or older men.**

Fact: Families with children are the fastest growing segment of the homeless population — over 750,000 school-age children and youth are homeless each night. Men, women, and children of all ages can be homeless.

Myth 2: **People are homeless by choice.**

Fact: Most people become homeless due to health, economic, or other personal crises.

Myth 3: **People with jobs don't become homeless.**

Fact: For many of the working poor or minimum wage earners, their salaries are not enough to cover basic expenses including housing.

Myth 4: **Homelessness is an urban problem.**

Fact: People are homeless in all areas of the country — including small towns, suburbs, and rural areas.

>over

FACTSHEET

Myth 5: Homeless people are cared for by their friends or family.

Fact: Many homeless people do not have relatives or friends they can count on for help. When they do "double up," the overcrowding can become burdensome.

Myth 6: People become homeless because they drink, use drugs, or are mentally unstable.

Fact: 26% are children under age 18, 11% are physically disabled, 21% are victims of domestic violence, 33% are veterans, and 34% are receiving mental health services.

Myth 7: Homeless people are lazy and don't want to work.

Fact: Approximately 25% of homeless adults work.

Myth 8: People on the streets don't want help — there are plenty of homeless shelters and services.

Fact: In most cities, there are far more people needing shelter and services than are currently accommodated.

Myth 9: Government welfare policies prevent children from becoming homeless.

Fact: Declining welfare benefits and housing assistance have contributed to record numbers of children experiencing homelessness.

30

What Schools Can Do

Problem: Homework is difficult for children who don't have a quiet, proper place to study and work

Solution: Provide a place to study, materials, and homework help before and after school.

Problem: Hunger interferes with children paying attention, listening, studying, staying on task, and making friends.

Solution: Provide a nutritious breakfast, lunch, and snack for children, and have food available in classrooms to feed hungry children.

Problem: Children sleep in class due to inadequate nighttime sleeping arrangements.

Solution: Establish an appropriate place for children to rest. It is better for them to miss some instruction while sleeping than to experience school failure because they are unable to concentrate.

Problem: Children have trouble getting to school because transportation is limited or unavailable.

Solution: Provide special transportation to assist parents who cannot get their children to bus routes.

>over

TIPSHEET

Problem: Children miss school to care for siblings.

Solution: Arrange with other community agencies to provide appropriate child care.

Problem: The same clothes are worn repeatedly; they may be soiled, the wrong size, or for the wrong season.

Solution: Create a "clothes closet" for emergencies and arrange with community agencies to provide for appropriate clothing.

Problem: School supplies and extracurricular activities are too costly.

Solution: Provide supplies to facilitate children's involvement in school activities and waive fees and provide transportation to enable children to participate in extracurricular activities.

Problem: Personal hygiene is inadequate.

Solution: Provide personal hygiene products and a place for students to bathe.

Problem: Medical and stress-related problems are unattended.

Solution: Make sure that students have access to school or community-based medical and mental health referrals and services.

Planning an Awareness Campaign

Some ideas to get you started

- Develop posters that raise awareness about homelessness and display them at schools, community buildings, local public libraries, grocery stores, or shopping centers.
- Have students develop greeting cards with awareness messages. Sell them and donate the proceeds to local homeless shelters or purchase backpacks, books, and school supplies for children.
- Develop a campaign to provide basic necessities to homeless families. Decorate containers and display them at schools, libraries, grocery stores, shopping centers, and local shops. Solicit the following types of items: food, clothing, backpacks, toiletries, books, school supplies, and anything else you think might be useful to families experiencing homelessness.
- Prepare information packets about homelessness and send them home with students.
- Develop public service announcements, produce newspaper advertisements, or partner with community groups that work with the homeless to develop a campaign that conveys accurate information and promotes supporting families without houses.

TIPSHEET

Designing a Resource Brochure for Parents

Audience: School personnel

Purpose: Participants create a six-panel (two-sided) brochure to provide information to parents of homeless students about school and community programs and services.

Preparation:

1. Use the brochure template on page 31 or make one of your own.
2. Prepare a copy for each participant.
3. Prepare an overhead of the template.
4. Gather samples of type faces, clip art, or other graphics to use on the brochure.
5. Arrange for a class or small group of students to complete the desktop publishing of the brochure after your meeting.

Equipment and Materials:

Handouts
Overhead projector
Sample graphics

Procedure:

1. Individually or in small groups, have staff members add to and customize the basic information on the template:
   - What other examples can we add to panel 5?
   - What names and contact information do we want to include on panel 6?
   - What resources and contact information do we want to include on panels 2, 3, and 4?
2. Add ideas from participants to the overhead of the template.
3. As a group, finalize the brochure text.
4. Have participants decide on a general graphics treatment for the brochure.
5. Decide how many copies to make and how to disseminate them.

Time: Approximately 2-1/2 hours

Follow-up:

1. Carefully proofread and correct the brochure text.
2. The finalized brochure may need translation into multiple languages for parents.
3. Students who desktop publish the brochure will need about 3 hours to create an English-language layout, and additional time to lay out any translations and make copies.

How to Help Your Child Succeed in School	Whom Do I Contact If I Have Questions or Need Support?	A Brochure for Families in Transition: **What Parents Need to Know**
Examples... ■ Make sure your child attends school every day. ■ Make education a family priority for your child. ■ Spend a few minutes reading to your children every day. ■ Your child can be encouraged by your interest in his or her school day, homework and papers and when you take time to ask questions or visit the school. *(insert more examples)* **5**	District/School staff who work with homeless families: *(insert names/numbers)* **6**	*(insert names of your school and unified school district)* **1**

Resources	Resources	Resources
(list referral information about school, district, and community resources) Food Resources Health Clinics Health Information Child Care/Preschool Information **2**	Housing Homeless shelters Domestic violence shelters Youth shelters Transitional units Department of Children and Family Services Child support Employment services 24-hour hotlines **3**	*(insert other resources homeless families should know about)* **4**

Over 750,000 School-Age Children and Youth Are Homeless Every Night

Audience: School personnel; may also include parents and community members

Purpose: Participants become more aware of how many homeless children and youth there are, especially in the local community.

Preparation:

1. Contact your state McKinney-Vento Act Coordinator or a local shelter to get help with the facts of homelessness in your state and community.
2. Contact your district for the facts about homeless students in your district and school.
3. Make a copy of the handout on page 33 for each participant.
4. Make an overhead or large version of the handout.

Equipment and Materials:

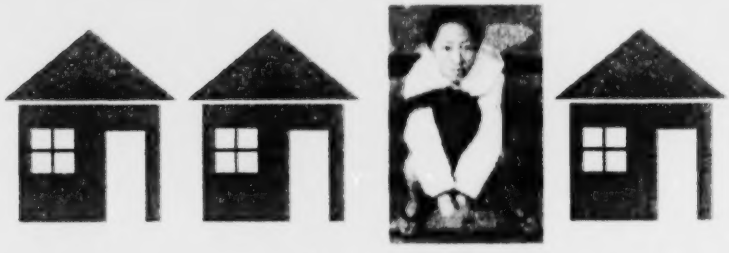
Handouts

Overhead projector, transparency and marker; or large writing surface the whole group can see, marker or chalk

Procedure:

1. Have participants each fill in their handouts with their best guesses.
2. On the overhead or large version of the handout, fill in the facts.

Time: Approximately 10 minutes



Over 750,000 School-Age Children and Youth Are Homeless Every Night

How many are in your...	Guess	Fact
State		
County		
City		
School District		
School		

Where Do the Children Sleep?

Audience: School personnel; may also include parents and community members

Purpose: Participants will increase their awareness of what it means for the homeless students in their school to have to sleep in a variety of places other than their own homes.

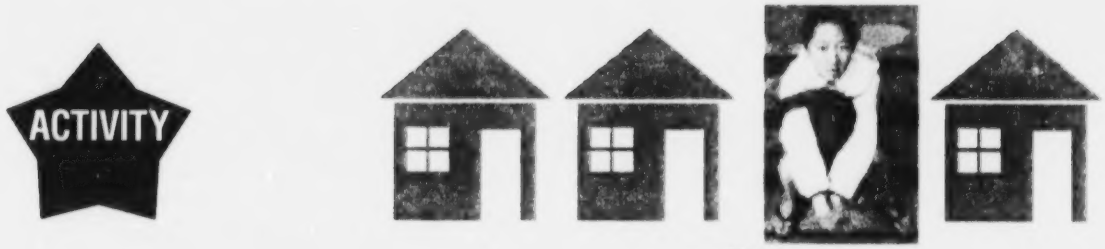
Preparation: Make a copy of the handout on page 35 for each participant.

Equipment or Materials: Handouts

Procedure:

1. Ask participants to consider each question in the box at the top of the handout.
2. After a minute or two, facilitate a discussion about the three questions on the bottom half of the handout.

Time: Approximately 5 minutes



Where Do the Children Sleep?

At a homeless shelter?	Yes	No	Don't Know
At a domestic violence shelter?	Yes	No	Don't Know
At a motel or hotel?	Yes	No	Don't Know
In a car?	Yes	No	Don't Know
At a campground?	Yes	No	Don't Know
At a local park?	Yes	No	Don't Know
In an abandoned building?	Yes	No	Don't Know
"Doubled up" with friends or family?	Yes	No	Don't Know

Ask yourself:

1. Are these safe places for children?

2. Are these places conducive to doing homework?

3. Do these places allow for easy access to school and other services?

How Does It Feel to Be Homeless?

Audience: School personnel; may also include parents and community members

Purpose: Participants will try to think about how it feels to be homeless from the perspective of a child.

Preparation: Make a copy of the handout on page 37 for each participant.

Equipment or Materials: Handouts

Procedure:

1. Read aloud the two passages.
2. Ask participants to think about the passages and to write down a few words or phrases that reflect their thoughts or feelings.
3. Facilitate a discussion about the thoughts and feelings the passages evoked for participants.

Time: Approximately 30 minutes

ACTIVITY

How Does It Feel to Be Homeless?

"People in school call me a hotel kid.... They have no right to punish me for something I have no control over. I'm just a little boy, living in a hotel, petrified, wanting to know what's going to happen to me. I am not a hotel kid. I am a child who lives in a hotel."

— 12-year-old boy
From: *The New York Times*, September 30, 1990

Cardboard Boxes

"Homeless people live in cardboard boxes,
don't they?"

That's what some kid said to me today.
Then he laughed.

I wanted to hit him.
But I didn't...I laughed too.

Then,

I went back to the shelter and ~~died~~ cried.

— Jamie, age 13

What Do You Know about Homelessness?

Audience: School personnel; may also include parents and community members

Purpose: Participants will confront some stereotypes about homelessness and increase their awareness of facts about homeless families.

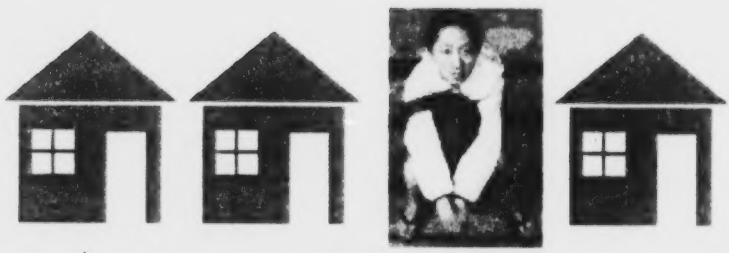
Preparation: Make a copy of the handout on page 40 for each participant.

Equipment or Materials: Handouts

Procedure:

1. Have each person answer complete the 10-question true-false quiz.
2. When everyone is finished, provide the answers from the answer key on page 39.
3. Invite participants to reflect on what they learned from the quiz.

Time: Approximately 15 minutes



What Do You Know about Homelessness?

Answer Key

T or F	1. Families with children are the fastest growing segment of the homeless population.
T or **F**	2. Homeless people are typically single men. **False:** Nationally, homeless families make up almost as large a percentage of the homeless (40%) as men do (45%) .
T or **F**	3. Homeless children do not have the same rights to a public education as children with permanent addresses. **False:** Homeless children have the same rights as housed children, including transportation.
T or **F**	4. There is nothing that teachers can do to help their students who experience homelessness. **False:** Often a teacher can provide much-needed structure, support, and stability in the lives of homeless children and, with training, can provide a rich and challenging learning environment for them.
T or **F**	5. Families are homeless because they are lazy. **False:** About 25% of the homeless work for wages; and an enormous amount of physical and mental stamina is required to negotiate the chaos and fear associated with transiency.
T or F	6. Homeless shelters do not provide adequate space and support for children to complete their homework.
T or **F**	7. Parents of homeless children do not care about their children's education. **False:** Parents do care. They are often so overwhelmed with finding work, food, and shelter for their children that education loses its priority due to the lack of basic necessities.
T or **F**	8. Homeless families are aware of the resources available to them. **False:** Homeless parents often do not know about all the services available to them. They are often unaware of their children's rights to education as well.
T or F	9. Transportation is often a major hurdle for homeless families.
T or F	10. Parents have a right to keep their children in their original school or move them into a nearby school.

What Do You Know about Homelessness?

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T or F	8. Homeless families are aware of the resources available to them.
T or F	9. Transportation is often a major hurdle for homeless families.
T or F	10. Parents have a right to keep their children in their original school or move them into a nearby school.

How Can We Support Homeless Children?

Audience: School personnel, parents, and community members

Purpose: Participants will think about how different members of the school, community, and family can support children experiencing homelessness.

Preparation:

1. Decide whether your group needs Worksheet A or B, on pages 42 and 43. (Use B if you want to customize the role types for your participants or to have participants suggest role types).
2. Make copies of Worksheet A or B for all participants.

Equipment and Materials:

Worksheets

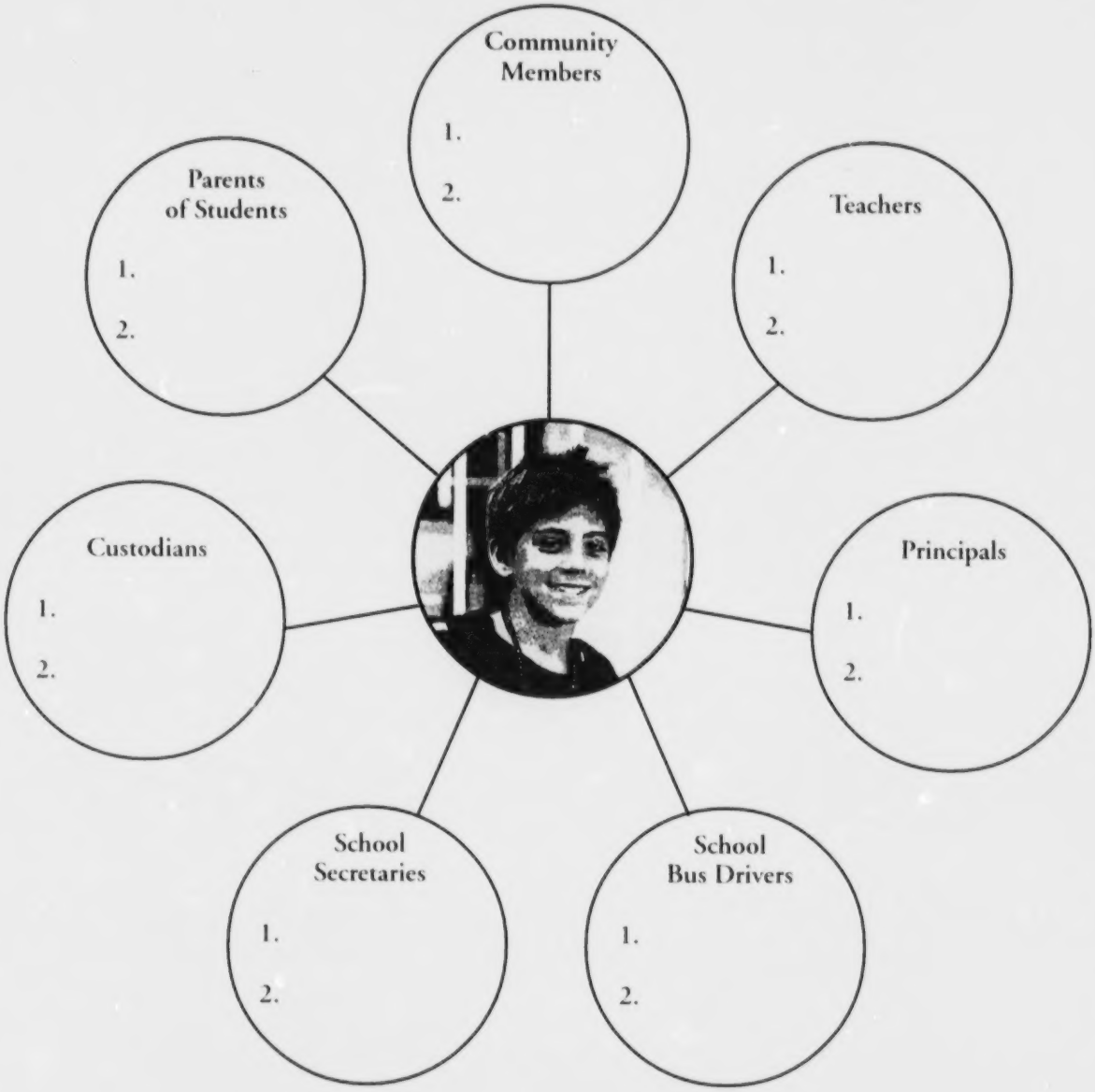
Large writing surface the whole group can see, marker or chalk

Procedure:

1. Go over the worksheet with the group, having them fill in the role types if necessary.
2. Have participants work individually or in pairs to write down at least two things people in each role can do to improve the health, well-being, and academic success of homeless students.
3. Facilitate a discussion about participants' responses and generate a group list of ways homeless students can be supported.

How Can We Support Homeless Children?

What can people in each role group do to improve the health, well-being, and academic success of homeless students?

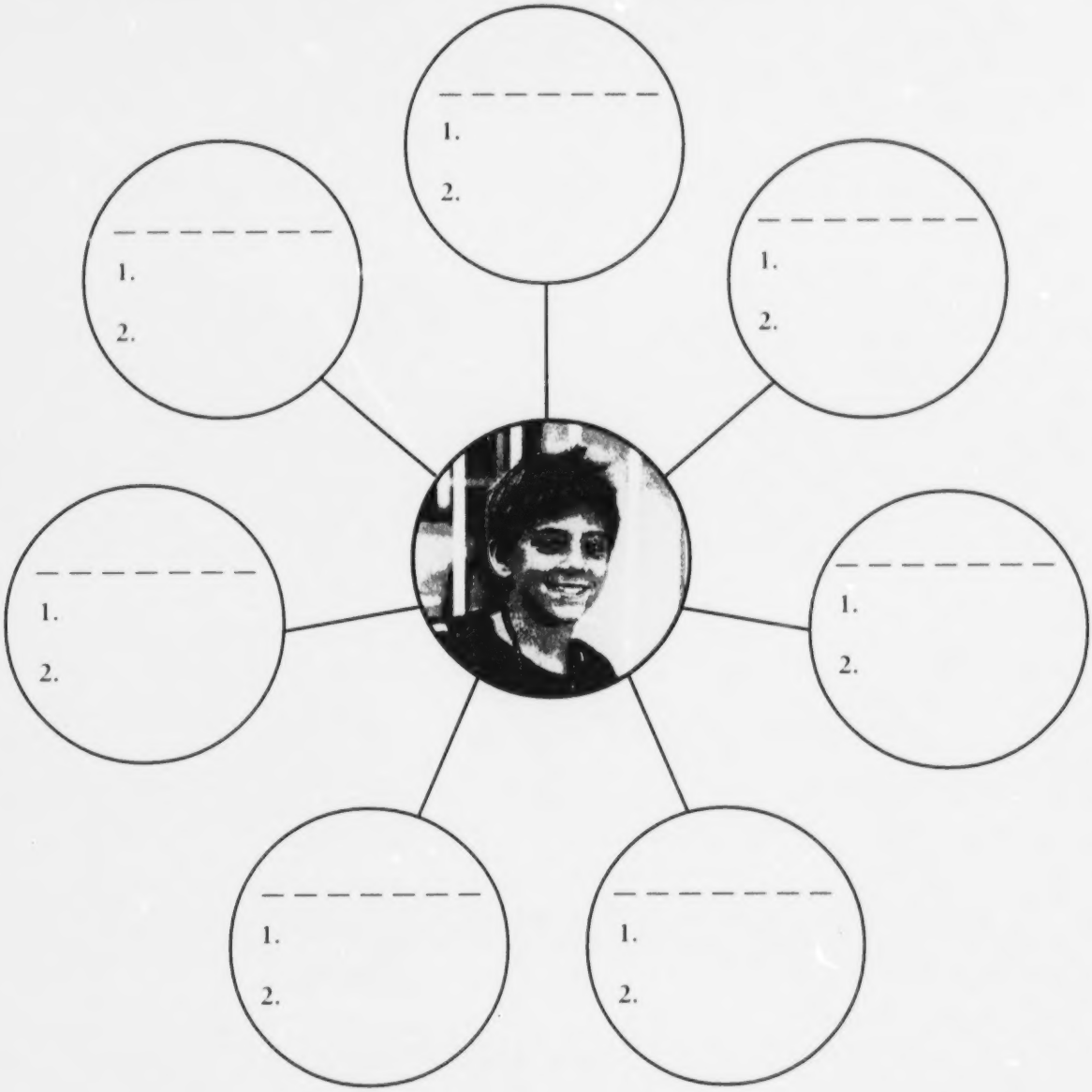


Worksheet A

47

How Can We Support Homeless Children?

What can people in each role group do to improve the health, well-being, and academic success of homeless students?



Worksheet B

Planning a Visit to a Homeless Shelter

Audience: School personnel

Purpose: Planning for the visit will sensitize participants to the ways they can best carry out their visit. The visit itself should increase participants' understanding of shelter life and the challenges families experiencing homelessness face.

Preparation:

1. Prepare a list of shelter(s) that send children to your school and add it to the worksheet on page 45.
2. Invite a small group to help you plan the visit.
3. Make a copy of the worksheet for each member of your planning group.

Equipment or Materials: Worksheets

Procedure:

1. Explain that in planning a visit to a shelter, the group will want to incorporate a way to make a meaningful contribution while there, perhaps by helping in the kitchen, bringing donations, reading to children, or talking with parents.
2. Review the To Do List on the worksheet with the group.
3. Together discuss what will be involved in each step.
4. Allocate responsibilities.
5. Set deadlines.

Time: Approximately 2 hours for the initial planning

Planning a Visit to a Homeless Shelter

Shelter(s) where our students stay:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

To Do List	Person in Charge	Deadline
Contact a shelter director regarding your group's desire to visit. *Explain to the shelter director:* ✔ We have children attending our school who stay in your shelter. ✔ We would like to gain a better understanding of what these children and youth need so that we may better serve them. ✔ We would like to develop a system to better serve homeless children and youth from your shelter. ✔ We are eager to learn. *Ask the shelter director:* ✔ How can we best help at the shelter, while gaining an understanding of how to serve our children and youth experiencing homelessness? ✔ May we arrange to talk with parents about their needs? ✔ How would you like us to visit (small groups of a specific number over time, several groups at one time)?		
Develop and send invitations.		
Post sign-up sheets for people who want to volunteer at the shelter.		
Arrange for a donation of books, food, or clothing to be delivered during the visit.		
Arrange for transportation.		
Arrange for a follow-up debriefing about the visit, focused on what participants learned about the lives of families who live in shelters.		
Schedule your next meeting or check-in.		
What else?		

Chapter 2: Overcoming Barriers

RECEIVING AN EDUCATION IS CENTRAL TO SUCCEEDING IN LIFE. For children and youth experiencing homelessness, going to school — learning, playing, making friends, and belonging to a community — is one of the few stable and hopeful aspects of their lives. The right of all children and youth to receive a free public education is firmly established in local, state, and federal law. Even still, children from homeless families often face formidable barriers to enrolling in school and obstacles to their regular attendance.

Protecting the Education Rights of Homeless Children

Several laws provide for the education of homeless children. The most comprehensive framework for protecting the education rights of children experiencing transiency and persistent poverty is the *Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act.* Passed by Congress in 1987 and revised in 2001 as the McKinney-Vento Act, this legislation responds to the critical needs of people experiencing homelessness. Over the years this legislation has become the cornerstone for improving educational opportunities for children and youth, causing states to revise educational policies, practices, laws, and regulations with the intent to eliminate barriers to school enrollment and attendance and to foster academic success for students without a home. The McKinney-Vento Act specifically protects children and youth by establishing the following:

- Each state educational agency shall ensure that homeless children have access to the same free, appropriate public education provided to other children and youth.
- States shall review and revise policies, practices, laws, and regulations that act as barriers to the enrollment, attendance, and success of homeless children and youth.
- Homelessness alone should not be sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment.
- Homeless children and youth should have access to education and other services that are needed to ensure they have an opportunity to meet the same challenging performance standards as other students.

Federal law under the *Improving America's Schools Act* further provides statutory protection to homeless school-age children and youth (*Improving America's Schools Act,* Title I, Part A, of the *Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965,* as amended Section 1113[c][3]; 20 U.S. Code[USC] Section 6313[c][3]). Title I, Part A requires the reservation of funds from district-level Title I allocations. These set-aside shall be used, where appropriate, according to law, to provide services to homeless

students comparable to those provided to housed students attending Title I schools and to eligible homeless children not attending Title I schools, including education-related services to children in shelters.

With the passage of the McKinney-Vento Act, many communities and states have taken steps to uphold the educational rights of homeless students. A number of policies on residency, school records, immunizations, guardianship, and transportation that had effectively denied homeless children and youth their right to a public education have been modified or eliminated. For example:

- A permanent address isn't needed to enroll a child in school.
- A child's family has a choice of school placement, when feasible, to either remain at the school of origin before becoming homeless or enroll at the school serving the attendance area in which a family currently lives.
- Enrollment can't be denied because residency, immunization, guardianship, and other documents aren't immediately available.
- A homeless child is entitled to participate in all extracurricular activities and may be eligible to participate in local, state, and federal programs (i.e., food programs, before- and after-school activities, Title I, gifted and talented programs, special education programs, vocational programs).
- A homeless child may be entitled to transportation to and from school.
- Homelessness alone isn't a valid reason for isolating or separating students from a mainstream school environment.
- States are responsible for removing all barriers to enrollment, attendance, and success in school.

Despite these statutory protections, many state requirements and local practices still pose educational barriers for homeless children and youth.

Describing the Barriers and Ways to Address Them

The most frequent and most persistent barriers to educating students experiencing homelessness include the following:

1. Residency Requirements

State compulsory attendance laws specify that children will be provided access to schools in the district in which they and their family reside. As a prerequisite to enrollment, students must show proof of permanent residency in an attendance area. Homeless children and youth often don't have an official permanent residence. Their families move frequently, "double up" with other families, split up into multiple residences, or live in places without an address, such as in a car or under a freeway.

What Works

- ✔ Hotel or motel receipts.
- ✔ School enrollment affidavit of residence.
- ✔ Letter from a shelter staff or other social service provider.

2. Lack of Personal and School Records

Documentation such as birth date verification, immunization registers, and school records are needed for school enrollment. Obtaining the necessary documentation can be logistically difficult and prohibitively expensive for homeless families. Because homeless families lack a secure residence and frequently move to temporary living arrangements, keeping track of and preserving documents is daunting. Parents may not be able to afford immunizations or know about public health immunization programs, and they may find the process of requesting documents from previously attended schools distressingly slow. Delays in receiving test scores, course grades, and grade-level placements can create a significant interruption in the education of mobile children and youth.

What Works

- ✔ Verifying birth date using a birth certificate, baptismal record, passport, immigration certificate, bible record, notice of birth from the delivery hospital, county recorder's record, school records, or social service records.
- ✔ Confirming immunization status in records from clinics, doctors, schools, or social service agencies.
- ✔ Referring a student to a health clinic to receive appropriate immunizations.
- ✔ Allowing a parent or guardian to complete a personal beliefs exemption, which exempts the need for immunization records.
- ✔ Requesting that a complete set of school records (i.e., grade-level placement, report cards, test scores, eligibility for special programs) from previously attended schools be mailed, faxed, or e-mailed to the new school.
- ✔ Helping families compile and secure a complete portfolio of all personal and school records for future use.

3. Guardianship Requirements

Enrollment in school requires the signature of a parent or legal guardian. Yet homelessness often forces families to temporarily place their children with friends or relatives who don't qualify as guardians. For runaway youth or for those children thrown out of their family home, guardianship requirements can delay or deny their enrollment.

What Works

- ✔ Accepting a caregiver's authorization affidavit or the signature of a social worker or case manager.

4. Transportation

Getting to and from school and before- and after-school activities can be a significant hurdle for homeless students. Arranging for interdistrict transportation for students attending their school of origin before becoming homeless can be complicated and expensive. Shelters, hotels and motels, and campgrounds are often not on regular school bus routes. Children picked up and dropped off at these locations may feel embarrassed, causing them to refuse bus service. Students often experience a disruption in schooling when jurisdictional issues are being resolved or when free or subsidized transit passes are being processed and issued.

What Works

- ✔ Routing school buses to transport homeless students to wherever they reside, and picking them up first and dropping them off last to avoid other students seeing where they live.
- ✔ Providing free or subsidized transit passes.
- ✔ Using Title I funds to pay for transportation costs, or using McKinney-Vento Act funds to pay the excess costs of transporting homeless students to and from school not otherwise provided by other sources.

5. Class Size Reduction

The goal of lowering class size is intended to improve early learning and achievement and increase opportunities for teachers to better understand student needs and learning styles. With caps set for class size, it may be difficult to enroll students who are not likely to attend school for the entire year. For homeless students, enrollment may be delayed in their school of origin or schools in the attendance area in which they're temporarily housed.

What Works

- ✔ Ensuring, when feasible, that homeless students attend their school of origin before becoming homeless, the school in which they were last enrolled, or the schools that serve the attendance area in which they currently reside.

6. Lack of Basic Supplies and Medical Attention

For students who lack a home, a significant barrier to regular attendance is the lack of school materials, clean and appropriate clothing, personal hygiene supplies, and medical and dental care. Without a backpack and school supplies, students are unable to participate in learning

activities and produce work. Students feel ashamed when they are unable to cleanse their bodies and wear laundered clothes, and they may avoid school when they experience untreated vision, hearing, dental, or mobility conditions.

What Works

Providing for basic supplies and referrals to medical and dental services:

- ✔ Supplying backpacks, pencils, art supplies, paper, books, and other materials used in the classroom.
- ✔ Providing nutritious snacks, school uniforms, clothes and shoes, and laundry and shower facilities.
- ✔ Coordinating medical and dental services.

7. Complicated Processes

For families without a home, reliable transportation, money, or official documentation such as a birth certificate, the process to enroll their children in school can be daunting.

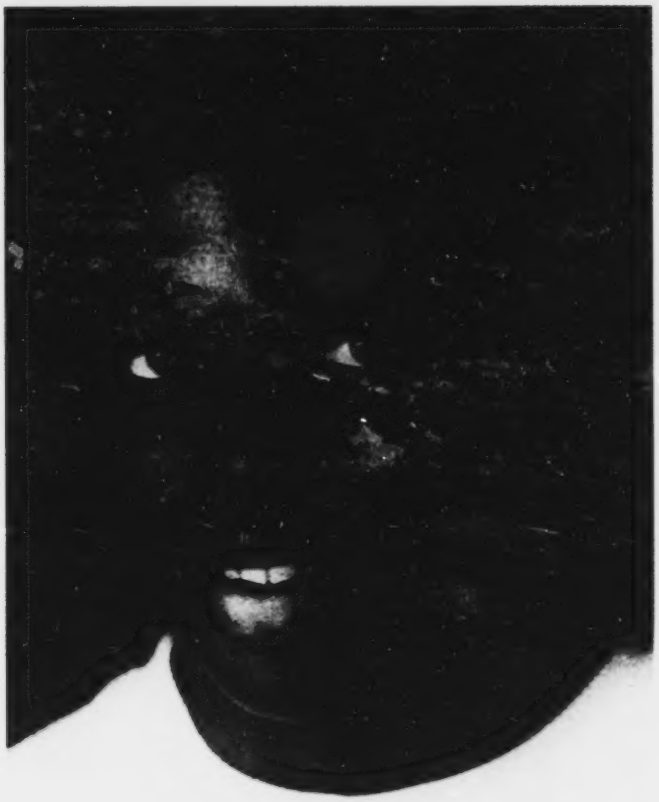
What Works

Establishing comprehensive and centralized school enrollment services for homeless families:

- ✔ Hiring home-school liaisons responsible for identifying homeless students, overseeing enrollment, providing follow-up support to encourage regular attendance, and upholding the educational rights of students experiencing homelessness.
- ✔ Centralizing administrative support for homeless families to ensure a "one-stop" approach to school enrollment.
- ✔ Training school secretaries to serve as brokers between schools and families to expedite student enrollment.

MATERIALS & ACTIVITIES

Chapter 2: Overcoming Barriers



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Role of School

"What homeless children need most of all is a home … but while they are experiencing homelessness, what they need most is to remain in school. School is one of the few stable, secure places in the lives of homeless children and youth — a place where they can acquire the skills they need to help them escape poverty."

National Coalition for the Homeless, 1998

OVERHEAD

Attendance Requirements and Eligibility

Federal, state, and local eligibility laws and policies:

- Children and youth are required to attend school.
- Parents and guardians are required to allow children and youth to attend school.
- Discrimination and inequitable treatment of students is prohibited.
- Local districts are compelled to enroll all eligible children and youth.
- Federal and state agencies are required to comply with the above.

FACTSHEET

Rights and Responsibilities

Children's Rights	Parents' Responsibilities	Schools' Responsibilities
Children experiencing homelessness have these rights:	*Parents experiencing homelessness have these responsibilities:*	*Schools serving families experiencing homelessness have these responsibilities:*
■ A free, appropriate public education. ■ To enroll in the school of origin before becoming homeless, or where last enrolled. ■ To enroll in the school in their best interest. ■ To enroll without complete or verified documents. ■ The basic school program offered to all students. ■ Comparable academic, social, psychological, transportation, and other supports that other students receive, even if the school is not a Title I funded school.	■ To enroll their children in school. ■ To ensure their children attend school regularly. ■ To properly immunize their children. ■ To keep copies of documents important to school enrollment. ■ To learn about their children's rights. ■ To learn about their own rights. ■ To participate in school activities.	■ To remove all barriers to enrollment, attendance, and school success. ■ To inform families of their rights and to uphold them. ■ To centralize and coordinate the enrollment and transfer process. ■ To reach out to families with information, advocacy, and support. ■ To teach to high standards for all students. ■ To provide for the immediate basic needs of children.

FACTSHEET

Title I and McKinney-Vento Act

Title I, Part A Reservation funds for Homeless Education, and McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act funds may be used by local education agencies to provide the following services to students attending Title I designated schools and non-Title I funded schools:

- Coordination of services to homeless students through designation of a liaison to make contacts with homeless families, youth, and service providers.
- Outreach services to children and youth living in shelters, transitional housing, motels, and other temporary shelters.
- Assistance for homeless children and youth who are attending schools not eligible for Title I funding.
- Provision of developmentally appropriate early childhood education programs, not otherwise provided through federal, state, or local funding for preschool-age children.
- Assistance to defray the costs of transportation to school.
- Referral to health services and counseling.
- Provision of tutoring, supplemental instruction, and enriched education services that are linked to district-adopted standards.
- Other needed assistance for students whose attendance and success at school is at risk due to a lack of fixed residence or adverse housing situations.

FACTSHEET

School Attendance

Reasons for Not Attending School

- Short stays at shelters or other transitional living arrangements make enrolling not seem worthwhile.
- Transportation to and from school is lacking.
- Frequent school changes are discouraging and homelessness feels shameful.
- Families in crisis often lack motivation to send children to school and can be preoccupied with securing food, shelter, and employment.
- School records may be missing or the transfer of school records is drawn out.
- Information about school requirements and school location is lacking.
- An abusive parent locating and harming children or stalking the custodial parent is a concern.
- Child care for young siblings and teen parents is not available.
- Children work for wages.
- Behavior problems or drug use trouble youth.

How to Improve School Attendance

Parents can

- Keep their children enrolled in their school of origin, even if they move during the school year.
- Notify the school to arrange for transportation if needed.
- Establish a routine of "early to bed, early to rise" to get to school regularly.
- Call school if their children will be absent to ensure continuous enrollment.
- Help with homework.
- Request a conference with the school if their children are experiencing learning difficulties.
- Request Title I and other services to help their children succeed in school.

Schools can

- Make children feel welcome and that they belong to the school community.
- Attend to children's basic needs.
- Help children make friends.
- Provide outreach and follow-up to absences.

Adapted from: Rafferty, Y. (1995). The legal rights and educational problems of homeless children and youth. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 17* (1).

FACTSHEET

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School Placement

Things to consider in determining a "best interest of the child" school placement:

- Safety of the child.
- Continuity of instruction.
- Need for special instructional programs.
- Quality of instruction in the school of origin.
- Age/grade of the child.
- School placement of siblings.
- Length of stay at a shelter or other temporary residence.
- Likely place of family's future residence.
- Access to transportation to and from school.

Adapted from: Foscarinis, M. & McCarthy, S. (2000). Removing educational barriers for homeless students: Legal requirements and recommended practices. In J. Stronge & Reed-Victor, E. (Eds.), *Educating homeless students: Promising practices.* Larchmont, NY: Eye On Education.

TIPSHEET

Portfolio Checklist

Things to include in a portfolio of personal and school records for future school transfers:

- ❑ Names and dates of attendance from previously attended schools.
- ❑ Letters from teachers or principals from previously attended schools documenting grade-level placements, eligibility for special services, test results, informal assessment results, perceived student interests and strengths, and attendance history.
- ❑ Contact information for the current school including address, e-mail address, phone and fax numbers, and a self-addressed stamped envelope to track where children re-enroll.
- ❑ Report cards.
- ❑ Address and phone number of last place of residence or a description of the location and circumstances.
- ❑ Previously completed documents, such as an enrollment affidavit of residence or caregiver affidavit.
- ❑ Documents: birth certificate or other verifying source of date of birth, immunization register or other verifying source of medical history, and proof of guardianship.
- ❑ Reports of past diagnoses: vision, hearing, dental, developmental, psychological, or mobility conditions that could impair learning.
- ❑ Samples of student work.
- ❑ A photograph of the student.
- ❑ A photograph of the class.

TIPSHEET

Transportation

Things to do to ease transportation difficulties to and from school:

- Provide subsidized transportation, including transportation tokens or monthly passes or taxi vouchers.
- Route school buses to pick up students living in motels, hotels, campgrounds, and shelters. Make sure that these students are picked up first and dropped off last to minimize feelings of shame and embarrassment.
- Provide transportation to before-school and after-school programs.
- Use McKinney-Vento Act and Title I funds to pay the excess costs of transporting homeless students to school.
- Sensitize bus drivers to the plight of the homeless and encourage them to become a trusted, caring adult for these children.

TIPSHEET

Key Provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act

Key Provisions	Examples of Applicable Services and Programs
Education Services	■ Tutoring and mentoring ■ Before-, after-, and summer school programs ■ Developmentally appropriate early childhood education programs ■ Expedited educational evaluations ■ Parent education and training programs
Coordination of Services	■ Ensuring homeless students have access to appropriate existing services (e.g., early childhood programs, special education programs, gifted and talented programs, vocational education, school meals) ■ Coordinating with existing programs (e.g., Head Start, programs for adolescents, and housing agencies) ■ Paying costs associated with tracking, obtaining, and transferring school records
Professional Development	■ Raising awareness among educators and the community ■ Providing specific training for educators
Transportation	■ Paying the excess cost of transporting homeless students to school
School Supplies	■ Providing school supplies to students ■ Providing supplies for non-school facilities that operate educational programs
Emergency Assistance	■ Providing other support, as necessary, to enroll and retain homeless students in school

From: National Center for Homeless Education at SERVE. (1999). *The education of homeless children and youth: A compendium of research and information.* Greensboro, NC: SERVE.

TIPSHEET

McKinney-Vento Act

The McKinney-Vento Act specifically protects children and youth by establishing the following:

- Each state education agency shall ensure that homeless children have access to the same free, appropriate public education provided to other children and youth.
- States shall review and revise policies, practices, laws, and regulations that act as barriers to the enrollment, attendance, and success of homeless children and youth.
- Homelessness alone should not be sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment.
- Homeless children and youth should have access to education and other services that are needed to ensure they have an opportunity to meet the same challenging performance standards as other students.

FACTSHEET

Sample School Enrollment Affidavit of Residence*

School Enrollment Affidavit of Residence

I, _____ , declare as follows:
(Name)

1. I am the parent/legal guardian of _____
who is school age and is seeking admission to _____
School District.

2. Since _____ ,
(Month & Year)
our family has not had a permanent home; however, we have been residing within the _____ School District boundaries and intend to remain herein.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the law of *[state]* that the foregoing is true and correct and of my own personal knowledge and that, if called upon to testify, I would be competent to testify thereto.

Date: _____

Signed: _____
(Signature)

I regularly contact and receive my mail at:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

I can be reached for emergencies at:

*This form is used in California to allow homeless children to be immediately enrolled in school. If your state or district does not have a similar form, please feel free to use or adapt it.

Sample Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit*

Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit

Use of this affidavit is authorized by Part 1.5 (commencing with Section 6550) Division 11 of the California *Family Code*.

Instructions: Completion of items 1 through 4 and the signing of the affidavit is sufficient to authorize enrollment of a minor in school and to authorize school-related medical care. Completion of items 5 through 8 is additionally required to authorize any other medical care. Print clearly.

The minor named below lives in my home and I am 18 years of age or older.

1. Name of minor: _____
2. Minor's birth date: _____
3. My name (adult giving authorization): _____
4. My home address: _____

   _____
5. ❑ I am a grandparent, aunt, uncle, or other qualified relative of the minor [see next page of this form for a definition of "qualified relative"].
6. Check one or both (for example, if one parent was advised and the other cannot be located):
   - ❑ I have authorized the parent(s) or other person(s) having legal custody of the minor of my intent to authorize medical care and have received no objection.
   - ❑ I am unable to contact the parent(s) or other person(s) having legal custody of the minor at this time to notify them of my intended authorization.
7. My date of birth: _____
8. My California driver's license or identification card number: _____

Warning: Do not sign this form if any of the statements above are incorrect, or you will be committing a crime punishable by fine, imprisonment, or both.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated: _____

Signed: _____

> over

*This form is used in California to allow homeless children to be immediately enrolled in school. If your state or district does not have a similar form, please feel free to adapt it.

Notices:

1. This declaration does not affect the rights of a minor's parents or legal guardian regarding the care, custody, and control of the minor and does not mean that the caregiver has legal custody of the minor.
2. A person who relies on this affidavit has no obligation to make any further inquiry or investigation.
3. This affidavit is not valid for more than one year after the date on which it is executed.

Additional Information:

To Caregivers

1. "Qualified relative," for purposes of item 5, means a spouse, parent, stepparent, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, half-brother, half-sister, uncle, aunt, niece, first cousin, any person denoted by the prefix "grand" or "great," or the spouse of any of the persons specified in this definition even after the marriage has been terminated by death or dissolution.
2. The law may require you, if you are not a relative or currently licensed foster parent, to obtain a foster home license in order to care for a minor. If you have any questions, please contact your local department of social services.
3. If the minor stops living with you, you are required to notify any school, health care provider, or health care service plan to which you have given this affidavit.
4. If you do not have the information requested in item 8 (California driver's license or identification number), provide another form of identification, such as your social security number or Medi-Cal number.

To School Officials

1. Section 48204 of the *Education Code* states that this affidavit constitutes a sufficient basis for a determination of residency of the minor, without the requirement of a guardianship or other custody order, unless the school district determines from other facts that the minor is not living with the caregiver.
2. The school district may require additional reasonable evidence that the caregiver lives at the address provided in item 4.

To Health Care Providers and Health Care Service Plans

1. No person who acts in good faith reliance upon a caregiver's authorization affidavit to provide medical or dental care, without actual knowledge of facts contrary to those stated on the affidavit, is subject to criminal liability or to civil liability to any person, or is subject to professional disciplinary action, for such reliance if the applicable portions of the form are completed. (*Family Code* Section 6550[d])
2. This affidavit does not confer dependency for health care coverage purposes.

How Does Your School Eliminate Barriers?

Audience: School personnel

Purpose: Participants learn how homeless students are identified, enrolled in school, and supported to attend school, as well as how to identify ways to further reduce barriers homeless students may encounter.

Preparation: Make a copy of the worksheet on page 68 for each participant.

Equipment and Materials:

Worksheets

Poster paper and markers

Procedure:

1. Either working as a whole group or in small groups, have participants fill in what they can on the worksheet.
2. Facilitate a discussion about participant responses. Make sure the information is accurate and becomes action oriented.
3. Conclude with a brainstorming activity that points at ways in which the listed improvements can be realized, and by whom.

Time: Approximately 45 minutes

How Does Your School Eliminate Barriers?

Identification	**Enrollment**	**Attendance**
How Are Homeless Students Identified?	What's the Enrollment Experience Like for Homeless Students?	What Promotes Regular Attendance?
What Needs to Improve?	What Needs to Improve?	What Needs to Improve?
Action Steps	Action Steps	Action Steps

Providing for Basic Needs

Audience: School personnel

Purpose: Participants learn what the basic needs of homeless students are and how to ensure that students get what they need.

Preparation: Make a copy of the worksheet on page 70 for each participant.

Equipment and Materials:

Worksheets

Large writing surface the whole group can see, marker or chalk

Procedure:

1. Individually or in small groups, have participants complete the worksheet.
2. Facilitate a discussion about participants' ratings. List basic needs that are not well met by your school.
3. Conclude by having participants consider what improvements the school could make. Discuss also whether other organizations are meeting any of these needs, and what the school could do in working with other organizations to better meet homeless students' needs.

Time: Approximately 30 minutes

Providing for Basic Needs

Ask yourself: How well does your school take care of the basic needs of students experiencing homelessness? Circle a response rating your school's performance.

Personal Hygiene			
Soap and shampoo	Poor	Moderate	Good
Showering	Poor	Moderate	Good
Laundering clothes	Poor	Moderate	Good
Dealing with head lice	Poor	Moderate	Good
Clothing			
Everyday wear	Poor	Moderate	Good
Uniforms	Poor	Moderate	Good
Seasonal clothing	Poor	Moderate	Good
Special event clothing	Poor	Moderate	Good
School Supplies			
Backpack	Poor	Moderate	Good
Pencils, pens, erasers, markers	Poor	Moderate	Good
Clipboard for doing homework without a desk or table	Poor	Moderate	Good
Portable battery-operated light	Poor	Moderate	Good
Art supplies	Poor	Moderate	Good
Reading materials	Poor	Moderate	Good
Materials to complete all homework assignments	Poor	Moderate	Good
Field trip and special event funds	Poor	Moderate	Good
Food			
Breakfast, lunch, or snacks	Poor	Moderate	Good
Transportation			
School bus service	Poor	Moderate	Good
Tokens, passes, or vouchers	Poor	Moderate	Good
Referrals			
Medical practitioner	Poor	Moderate	Good
Dentist	Poor	Moderate	Good
Social service provider	Poor	Moderate	Good
Mental health professional	Poor	Moderate	Good

Designing an Enrollment Brochure

Audience: School personnel

Purpose: Participants clarify and improve the school's student enrollment process, especially for students who are homeless, and publish and disseminate a brochure that accurately outlines this process.

Preparation:

1. Use the brochure template on page 72 or make one of your own.
2. Make a copy of your brochure template for each participant.
3. Prepare an overhead of the template.
4. Gather samples of type faces, clip art, or other graphics to use on the brochure.
5. Arrange for a class or small group of students to complete the desktop publishing of the brochure after your meeting.

Equipment and Materials:

Paper and transparency copies of the template
Overhead projector and transparency marker
Graphics examples

Procedure:

1. Individually or in small groups, have participants add to and customize the basic information on the template. Specifically, ask
   - What specific resources do we want to include on panel 5?
   - What names and contact information do we want to include on panel 6?
   - What information do we want to communicate to parents on panels 2, 3, and 4?
2. Bring the whole group together and add ideas from participants to the overhead of the template.
3. As a group, finalize the brochure text.
4. Have participants decide on a general graphics treatment for the brochure.
5. Decide how many copies to make and how to disseminate them.

Time: Approximately 2 1/2 hours

Follow-up:

1. Carefully proofread and correct the brochure text.
2. The finalized brochure may need translation into multiple languages for parents.
3. Students who desktop publish the brochure will need about 3 hours to create an English-language layout, and additional time to lay out any translations and make copies.

Our Community's Resources	Your Unified School District	A Brochure for Families in Transition: **Keeping Our Children in School**
Emergency Shelter *(insert names/numbers)* Transitional Housing *(insert names/numbers)* Clothing *(insert names/numbers)* Food *(insert names/numbers)* Medical *(insert names/numbers)* Other School Resources *(insert names/numbers)* **5**	Board of Education *(insert names)* Superintendent *(insert names)* District/School staff who work with homeless families *(insert names/numbers)* **6**	*(insert names of your school and unified school district)* **1**
What do families need to know about enrollment? **What do families need to know about attendance?** **2**	**Where can families turn for help in enrolling their children in school or transferring them to another school?** **3**	**What are the rights of all school-age children?** **4**

Taking Action

Audience: School personnel; may also include parents and community members

Purpose: The intent of this activity is to engage the school community in a set of planning activities that will lead to positive actions.

Preparation:

1. Make a copy for each participant of the list on page 74 of suggested volunteer activities, contributions, and education campaigns.
2. Make a copy for each participant of the worksheet on page 75.

Equipment and Materials:

Handouts

Large writing surface everyone can see, markers or chalk

Procedure:

1. Have participants work in small groups. Ask each group to select one or more ways to take action on behalf of homeless families, either directly or by working with agencies that serve homeless families. Groups may either choose from the suggestions on the handout or come up with their own ideas.
2. Bring the groups together to discuss their choices. Help the whole group come to consensus about one or two activities to commit to doing.
3. On the board or poster paper, reproduce the worksheet categories (i.e., Action(s), To Do List, Leadership, Deadline) to help frame the initial planning process. Consolidate participants' ideas on the poster paper or chalk board, and encourage everyone to make notes on their individual worksheets.
4. Conclude by setting a time to continue the planning or to begin implementing the plan.

Time: Approximately 1 1/2 hours for initial meeting

Follow-up: Expect a substantial time investment to fully plan and deliver an event, activity, or awareness campaign.

Taking Action Suggestions

There are many things a school community can do to raise their level of awareness about homelessness while reducing barriers that prevent students from participating in school and helping homeless families cope with trying circumstances.

You can plan volunteer activities, make contributions, or participate in awareness programs. Choose how you'd like to take action from the suggestions below or add your own ideas. Begin by answering the following:

- What actions could our school take?

Suggested Volunteer Activities

1. Work at a shelter: serve food, tutor children or adults, wash dishes, wash and sort clothes, or provide clerical support.
2. Offer professional services or skills directly or assist in job training: secretarial, catering, plumbing, accounting, carpentry, tutoring, fundraising, legal, child care, or counseling.
3. Share your hobbies: teach a group of shelter residents or work with an interested individual.
4. Help children: arrange for birthday parties, field trips, picnics, or workshops.
5. Other…

Suggested Contributions

1. Clothing and school supply drive: collect new and gently used clothing, backpacks, books, and school supplies; and donate them to a shelter or social service agency.
2. In-kind services and materials: donate copying, printing, food, transportation, computer equipment, or tickets to family events to programs that serve homeless families.
3. Adopt a homeless family as they move out of a shelter or transitional housing unit: donate household goods and furniture, groceries and dry goods, an offer to help with child care, or raise funds to contribute to the security deposit or rent.
4. Organize "survival kits": fill backpacks with hygiene supplies, cold-weather clothes, blankets, and food.
5. Other…

Suggested Education Campaigns

1. Read some of the recommended books listed in *Imagine the Possibilities.*
2. Read about homelessness to your children or show them a relevant video.
3. Organize with the teachers at your school a homelessness awareness week.
4. Other…

With the whole group, come to consensus about one or two actions to commit to doing:

- What needs to be done to make these happen?
- Who will take leadership for making these happen?
- What is the timeframe for planning and taking specific actions?

Taking Action Worksheet

Action(s) We Plan to Take:

To Do List	Leadership	Deadline
•		
•		
•		
•		

Chapter 3: School and Classroom Practices That Work

THE STRUGGLE TO LIVE WITHOUT A HOME, with all the interrelated burdens of poverty, affects the way children and youth experience school and the way teachers educate and relate to their students.

Schools can be safe havens for children — places of consistency, support, ideas, and hope for a bright future. But for many homeless children, their experiences with schooling is "in the shadow of opportunity." Their schools, often in poor and unsafe neighborhoods, can be unwelcoming places, with under-prepared teachers and under-resourced classrooms. To become effective learning communities for students despite their life circumstances, their schools must be caring and safe, and must use classroom practices that promise to leave no child behind.

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Conventional wisdom holds that academic success can be made attainable for all students by setting new standards, defining what students should know and be able to do, supporting teachers to use effective pedagogy, aligning assessments to the standards, and holding schools and communities accountable for students' performance and achievement gains. For educators who work with students experiencing homelessness, these reforms hold promise but also present concerns about what's at stake: that students whose lives are characterized by instability, poverty, family chaos, and fear will be further marginalized by efforts intended to raise the bar for everyone.

High-quality teaching and learning are central to effective schooling. Teachers must be skilled, resourceful, and flexible in planning for and delivering instruction to children experiencing homelessness. For academic success to be attainable for homeless students, the classroom focus on the acquisition of basic skills through working alone on repetitive, low-level tasks and quizzes must be replaced by more promising education practices. The enterprise of teaching must instead make an effort to integrate academic, social, emotional, cultural, and physical growth using a wide range of learning materials, flexible teaching styles, and meaningful ways to assess learning. Schools that have markedly improved the academic performance of underperforming students have centered their education program on tailoring children's learning experiences to their individual needs, capabilities, and potential.

Managing Behavior

Many of the emotions and behaviors typical of homeless students can be challenging to classroom teachers. Children without homes can be violent, angry, apathetic, clingy, mistrustful, bossy, promiscuous, fearful, and withdrawn during the school day. Using "carrot-and-stick" discipline to manage classrooms may result in obedience for some students who, for the short term, do what's expected. For homeless students, conventional ways to manage behavior can escalate problem and self-defeating behaviors, resulting in unproductive power struggles, meaningless consequences, and missed opportunities to teach and learn necessary life skills and prosocial behaviors. Children who experience their school day as a time of rejection, exclusion, and humiliation aren't successful learners.

What homeless students need are caring classrooms — safe, engaging, and respectful learning environments that, in turn, help children and youth grow into caring and responsible adults. In these classrooms, behavior is managed through a number of techniques that promote personal responsibility, mutual trust and respect, peacemaking, caring, resolving problems at the lowest possible level, and reflection to learn from mistakes and successes.

A Caring Place

Homelessness is not sympathetic to children and youth. By living with uncertainty, shame, and unmet basic needs, children without homes are often denied the type of sustained caring that results from friendships with peers, trusting relationships with adults, and opportunities to develop a sense of self-worth.

Caring is the heartbeat of good schools. It's what makes children and their families feel welcome and perceive a sense of belonging and affiliation to community. Caring is about relationships and commitment, mutuality and reciprocity, participation and continuity, and concern for and acceptance of others. Given the challenges homeless families face when enrolling their children in school and encouraging their regular attendance, it's essential that schools welcome poor and transient families into their community. Schools can welcome families by being nonjudgmental, efficient and flexible with policies and procedures, family-centered, and empathic about difficult life circumstances.

Promoting Good Health

Homelessness makes children sick. Beginning at birth, children from families without homes are more likely than other children to have low birth weights and to need special care after birth. From infancy throughout childhood, homeless children suffer from high rates of acute and chronic illnesses, especially asthma, ear infections, diarrhea, anemia, eczema, tuberculosis, ringworm, head lice, and fevers. Respiratory disorders like asthma are associated with exposure to harsh environmental allergens, smoke, dilapidated housing, and viruses that spread easily in crowded shelters and hotels.

Homeless children suffer from high levels of preventable and untreated diseases compared to children who live in safe and stable homes. Peeling lead-based paint eaten by hungry toddlers can cause lasting health and developmental problems. Exposed electrical wires, broken glass, and unscreened windows can be a source of injury, and unsanitary living conditions can spread diseases, especially to children who haven't received proper immunizations. Also, parents too poor and transient to secure good child care are often forced to leave young children unsupervised while they look for shelter, food, or work.

Lack of food and poor nutrition further compromise the health and development of more than four million children who experience moderate to severe hunger. Two-thirds of children without homes worry that they won't have enough food to eat each day. Many also lack adequate sleep, developing stress-related somatic disorders and severe fatigue that impair behavior and performance at school.

Good health and personal security are essential for children's bodies and minds to properly develop. Sleep, safety, and sustenance are needed for students to attend school regularly, to be attentive in classes, and to be successful in their studies and relationships. Yet the health of homeless children and youth is often not safeguarded by preventive care and treatment.

Effectively Educating Students without Homes and Ways to Make It Happen

Having children and youth attend safe and nurturing schools helps to break the cycle of poverty and homelessness. Educating those who are sick, scared, and hungry; who come from families uprooted from their belongings, friends, and social networks; and who have limited opportunities to study and play in the same ways as their peers who live in stable homes is a challenge that must be met. Educators and service providers have found many effective ways to promote the academic success, health, and well-being of children experiencing homelessness:

1. Delivering Curricula That Promote Meaningful Learning

The content and design of curricula affect student engagement in learning. Educators can do many things to better ensure that what they're teaching is meaningful and presented in ways that engage students with an uneven history of schooling.

What Works

- ✔ Designing lessons that build upon student interests and strengths, and that are meaningful to their lives.
- ✔ Ensuring that curricula convey high-expectation messages, foster positive peer relationships, allow for problem solving and decisionmaking, and are developmentally appropriate.
- ✔ Using lessons to promote self-expression.

- ✔ Keeping learning fun.
- ✔ Moving away from a fixed scope and sequence approach to curricula to one based more on central ideas and themes.
- ✔ Offering curricular units as "miniclasses" so students can experience completion and mastery of parts of lessons.
- ✔ Allowing for flexible course offerings so students unable to attend school during designated times of the day or year can still take courses, especially those required for graduation.
- ✔ Making sure that curricular content affirms and develops native languages and cultures.
- ✔ Aligning course offerings among school, after-school programming, and shelter-based programming.
- ✔ Infusing life skills across the curricula.
- ✔ Making sure that students have access to all the education services that they're eligible to receive, including gifted and talented programs, Title I, special education, and second language acquisition support.

2. Using Instructional Strategies That Promote Learning and Caring

There's no one right way to teach students experiencing homelessness. Skilled educators use multiple instructional modalities, steering away from rote and drill practice worksheets. Engaging students and increasing their time on task involves discourse and other forms of expression about the subject matter.

What Works

- ✔ Eliminating ability grouping and instead using cooperative learning techniques, cross-age classes, blended groups, and paired activities to build social skills and enhance feelings of belonging.
- ✔ Using mastery learning techniques, including advanced organizers, guided practice, modeling, and teaching to the objective; breaking the subject matter into small units; and providing direct student feedback.
- ✔ Tailoring instruction to meet individual students' needs, capabilities, and potential.
- ✔ Adjusting homework assignments by eliminating assignments that require access to a computer, television, or telephone; offering supplies and resources to complete assignments; and giving students a "portable desk" to work from, which includes a clipboard, pencils, paper, and an attachable light.
- ✔ Providing ample "wait time" and supportive comments.
- ✔ Creating opportunities for self-expression, dialogue, and analytical thinking.

- ✔ Using computer-assisted learning for remedial, accelerated, and enriched learning opportunities.
- ✔ Applying learning-style theory to the instructional program.
- ✔ Allowing for student self-pacing of tasks.
- ✔ Teaching learning readiness skills such as listening, following directions, and asking for help.
- ✔ Capitalizing on "teachable moments" by flexibly adapting instructional programs to better engage students.
- ✔ Promoting language development.
- ✔ Augmenting the instructional program with tutoring, enrichment activities, or supplementary instruction at Saturday school or after-school programs.

3. Making Classroom Assessments Meaningful

Classroom assessments aren't a public index of success but rather a window into the life circumstances, learning styles, and achievement levels of students. Done well, these assessments can provide teachers, students, parents, and other service providers meaningful information about how more and better learning can take place. This information is especially important for highly mobile students — who move in and out of classrooms and attend school for limited periods of time — since test results from standardized, high-stakes tests are often unavailable or irrelevant given these students' checkered education histories.

What Works

- ✔ Assessing students in ways that don't require reading fluency, such as conversations and drawing pictures; administering inventories that identify students' strengths and interests.
- ✔ Administering curriculum-embedded tasks and quick performance assessments.
- ✔ Assigning students jobs and assessing their performance.
- ✔ Using journal writing with prompts to elicit students' interests, life experiences, and writing skills.
- ✔ Having students talk into a tape recorder about their lives, interests, and school experiences.
- ✔ Conducting focused, private, and ongoing conversations with students, parents, and other service providers.
- ✔ Developing a report-card-in-progress to regularly communicate achievement.

- ✔ Maintaining an updated inventory checklist of knowledge, skills, learning styles, and dispositions.
- ✔ Organizing portfolios of students' work.
- ✔ Maintaining an anecdotal record of impressions and professional judgments for ongoing review.
- ✔ Having ready reading and mathematics assessments that can be administered upon an unplanned arrival or departure.

4. Designing Classrooms That Help Manage Behavior

The way classrooms are designed and function affects student behavior. Specific classroom practices can unknowingly trigger adverse emotional reactions or exacerbate problem behaviors for homeless students. Likewise, there are practices that help keep in check troublesome behaviors by fostering motivation and self-control.

What Works

- ✔ Following a structured and predictable daily schedule to give students a sense of permanence and consistency.
- ✔ Having the same teacher in the classroom daily, and announcing in advance, when possible, arrangements for a substitute teacher.
- ✔ Minimizing the movement of classroom furniture.
- ✔ Allowing students to hold on to their personal belongings throughout the day to allay their fear of losing their few possessions.
- ✔ Posting and regularly reviewing student-generated classroom rules and consequences.
- ✔ Finding many reasons each day to offer authentic praise for each student's behavior.
- ✔ Facilitating age-appropriate friendships.
- ✔ Never punishing students for behaviors beyond their control, such as erratic attendance, tardiness, sleepiness, or not completing homework assignments.
- ✔ Never punishing students by taking away a possession, time with a friend, or play time.
- ✔ Never using food as a reward or punishment.

5. Promoting Prosocial Behavior to Manage the Classroom

Homeless students can display problem behaviors during the school day that stymie teachers and alienate classmates. Unless these behaviors are effectively managed, they can disrupt learning and morale in the classroom, and contribute to students' feelings of humiliation and loss of control.

What Works

- ✔ Posting and abiding by student-generated classroom rules that include consequences that are respectful, reasonable, and related to the behavior, and that reinforce personal responsibility.
- ✔ Encouraging students to use self-imposed "time-outs," in which they voluntarily separate from the rest of the class for a reasonable period of time to express their feelings, talk with a neutral person, or quietly reflect upon the incident.
- ✔ Finding regular and authentic reasons to offer students praise and encouragement.
- ✔ Teaching students how to fight fairly by attacking the problem and not the person, which includes avoiding the use of threats, excuses, name-calling, and blaming.
- ✔ Teaching students to be peacemakers by using conflict resolution skills.
- ✔ Conducting class meetings in which students and teachers engage in dialogue around issues of mutual concern, with the goal of solving problems.
- ✔ Never using threats, arguments, lectures, yelling, or sarcasm to address problem behaviors.
- ✔ Encouraging self-expression through journal writing, talking into a tape recorder, or play therapy.
- ✔ Using literature to teach problem-solving skills and to promote effective ways to cope with feelings.
- ✔ Making referrals to professional mental health specialists.

6. Ensuring Schools Are Caring Places

Homeless children need care, to be welcomed into the school community, and to experience support and empathy for their life circumstances. Schools can do many things to convey to families that their children belong in their schools and that their lives matter greatly.

What Works

- ✔ Establishing a buddy program so that all new students have an immediate friend and mentor.
- ✔ Operating a transition room where students become acquainted with the teacher and school before moving into the classroom, basic needs for food and supplies are met, and assessments of academic skills and emotional needs can be carried out.
- ✔ Designing classroom space to be as homelike as possible, with plants, pets, couches, food, photographs of students, and student art displays.
- ✔ Assigning homeless students personal space where they can safely store their belongings and retreat for privacy.

- ✔ Decorating the school hallways with bulletin boards that welcome families, including Polaroid pictures of all new students.
- ✔ Treating every day like it's the first day of school since homeless students often don't benefit from the transitioning that occurs during the first few days after school reopens.
- ✔ Assigning highly mobile students daily chores, such as taking care of pets, delivering attendance sheets to the office, shelving books, setting up art projects, or helping younger students during recess.
- ✔ Setting up a fund to ensure that all students can participate in field trips, birthday parties, after-school events, and school-picture programs regardless of family resources.
- ✔ Planning farewell rituals for students transitioning out of school, including giving them photographs of themselves and their friends, copies of their schoolwork and other papers that facilitate school enrollment, stamped envelopes that they can use to write to classmates, and time to say goodbye to friends and school staff.

7. Making Sure Children Are Fed and Rested

Children who are hungry and tired are preoccupied with survival, and may require help from schools to provide for their basic food and sleep needs in order to be attentive students.

What Works

- ✔ Having a school-based breakfast, lunch, and snack program.
- ✔ Keeping nutritious snacks in all classrooms.
- ✔ Making sure that all school meal tickets look the same to prevent embarrassment to children who receive all their meals on campus.
- ✔ Working with community-based service agencies to ensure that the federal Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) program offers homeless families nonperishable food at shelters and hotels.
- ✔ Partnering with shelters and other local service agencies to provide school children with nutritious meals.
- ✔ Creating a place on the school grounds where children can sleep for limited periods of time during the school day.

8. Protecting Children's Health

Children who suffer from chronic or acute illnesses may require help from schools to gain access to health services.

What Works

- ✔ Co-locating medical, dental, and mental health services on school campuses.
- ✔ Making referrals to local community medical, dental, and mental health clinics.
- ✔ Ensuring that all children enrolled in school receive proper immunizations, and that complete records are retained at the school.
- ✔ Hiring school nurses trained to work with highly mobile and poor families.
- ✔ Promoting good hygiene by housing laundry and shower facilities on school campuses and providing supplies such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo, soap, and bandages.
- ✔ Providing comprehensive screening for lead poisoning; developmental delays; vision, hearing, speech, and fine motor and gross motor difficulties; and medical, dental, and mental health conditions.
- ✔ Partnering with community-based services to provide mobile medical and dental care.
- ✔ Assisting shelters and hotels to address conditions that contribute to elevated risk for asthma, infectious diseases, and common injuries.

9. Encouraging Children to Play

Children who live in shelters or abandoned buildings frequently lack experience playing with common toys — balls, blocks, puppets, tricycles, crayons, and clay. Play is important for the healthy development of spatial perception and for understanding cause and effect in the physical world. Homeless children often don't have places to run and play team games, essential for developing fine and gross motor skills, coordination, physical strength, and endurance.

What Works

- ✔ Integrating unstructured and structured play time into the day's activities.
- ✔ Ensuring that all students are included and participate in games.
- ✔ Helping to arrange for students to participate in extracurricular athletic activities.
- ✔ Loaning children toys that encourage physical activity.
- ✔ Never depriving children access to recess, play times, or physical activities as a form of punishment.

MATERIALS & ACTIVITIES

Chapter 3: School and Classroom Practices That Work

"At a time when traditional structures of caring have deteriorated, school must become the place where teachers and students live together, talk with each other, take delight in each other's company. My guess is that when schools focus on what really matters in life, the cognitive ends we now pursue so painfully and artificially will be achieved somewhat more naturally.... It is obvious that children will work harder and do things — even odd things like adding fractions — for people they love and trust."

From: Noddings, N. (1988, December). Schools face crisis in caring. *Education Week*, 32.

OVERHEAD

"Most at-risk students learn best when the material is made personally meaningful and when they are actively involved and given choices, variety, and encouragement in a positive climate where they feel valued and have fun."

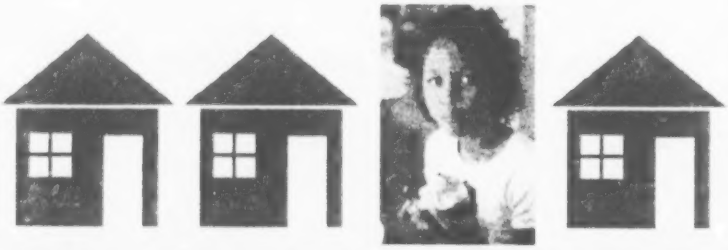
From: Phillips, V. (1998). *Empowering discipline: An approach that works with at-risk students.* Carmel Valley, CA: Personal Development Publishing.

OVERHEAD

"The teacher's job is not to control the students but to offer choices and guidance to help them get their needs met in a positive way."

From: Phillips, V. (1998). *Empowering discipline: An approach that works with at-risk students.* Carmel Valley, CA: Personal Development Publishing.

OVERHEAD



"When a student misbehaves, see it as a symptom and decode it!

Ask yourself:

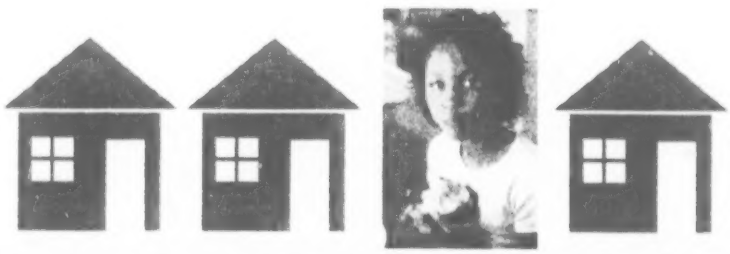
1. What does this behavior mean?
2. What is the student saying by acting out this way?
3. What need isn't being met?
4. What can I do to help?"

From: Phillips, V. (1998). *Empowering discipline: An approach that works with at-risk students.* Carmel Valley, CA: Personal Development Publishing.

OVERHEAD

"If they don't learn the way we teach, why don't we teach the way they learn?"

Author Unknown



OVERHEAD

"If you wish to make an impact
for one year,
plant corn.

If you wish to make an impact
for a generation,
plant a tree.

But if you wish to make an
impact for an eternity,
educate a child."

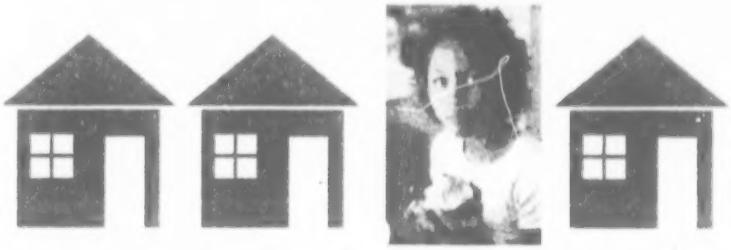
Author Unknown

OVERHEAD

25 Things Teachers Can Do for Homeless Students

1. Keep students' living situations confidential.
2. Give students things they can own (e.g., school supplies).
3. Don't take away students' possessions.
4. Assign "buddies" to newly arriving students.
5. Assign students classroom or school chores.
6. Teach students how to act responsibly, then expect responsible behavior.
7. Teach students healthy and appropriate ways to express their feelings.
8. Abide by consistent school routines and clear rules.
9. Give students limited choices.
10. Use appropriate assessments to make classroom placements.
11. Tailor the curriculum to include all students.
12. Divide the curriculum into small units to be completed daily or weekly.
13. Make smooth and predictable transitions from one activity to another.
14. Provide students with supplies they need to complete school assignments.
15. Make sure homework assignments are appropriate to their living situations.
16. Be sensitive when asking students to bring things from home.
17. Offer students nutritious snacks if they are hungry.
18. Help students meet their basic food, clothing, hygiene, and sleep needs.
19. Don't penalize students for things that are out of their control.
20. Arrange for students to participate in school programs regardless of cost.
21. Make sure students have access to education services for which they are eligible.
22. Work with local social service providers to help your students' families.
23. Learn more about homelessness and dispel stereotypes.
24. Show your students that you care about them.
25. Ensure that students can say goodbye to friends and staff if they must leave school.

TIPSHEET



Curriculum

Things teachers can do to design meaningful learning experiences for students experiencing homelessness:

- Design lessons that build upon student interests and strengths, and that are meaningful to their lives.
- Ensure that curricula convey high-expectation messages, foster positive peer relationships, allow for problem-solving and decisionmaking, and are developmentally appropriate.
- Use lessons to promote self-expression.
- Make learning fun.
- Move away from a fixed scope and sequence approach to curricula to one based more on central ideas and themes.
- Offer curricular units as "miniclasses" so students can experience completion and mastery of parts of lessons.
- Allow for flexible course offerings so students unable to attend school during designated times of the day or year can still take courses, especially those required for graduation.
- Make sure that curricular content affirms and develops native languages and cultures.
- Align course offerings among school, after-school, and shelter-based programming.
- Infuse life skills across the curricula.
- Make sure that students have access to all the educational services that they're eligible to receive, including gifted and talented programs, Title I, special education, and second language acquisition support.

TIPSHEET

Instruction

Things teachers can do to effectively teach students experiencing homelessness:

- Eliminate ability grouping and instead use cooperative learning techniques, cross-age classes, blended groups, and paired activities to build social skills and enhance feelings of belonging.
- Use mastery learning techniques, including advanced organizers, guided practice, modeling, and teaching to the objective; break subject matter into small units; and provide direct student feedback.
- Tailor instruction to meet student needs, capabilities, and potential.
- Adjust homework assignments by eliminating those that require access to a computer, television, or telephone; offer supplies and resources to complete assignments; and give students a "portable desk" to work from, which includes a clipboard, pencils, paper, and light.
- Provide students ample "wait time" and supportive comments.
- Create opportunities for self-expression, dialogue, and analytical thinking.
- Use computer-assisted learning for remedial, accelerated, and enriched learning opportunities.
- Apply learning-style theory to the instructional program.
- Allow for student self-pacing of tasks.
- Teach learning readiness skills such as listening, following directions, and asking for help.
- Capitalize on "teachable moments" to engage students in learning.
- Promote language development.
- Augment the instructional program with tutoring, enrichment activities, or supplementary instruction at Saturday school or after-school programs.

TIPSHEET

Learning Groups

Students who work in learning groups benefit in several ways:

- Retention of knowledge
- Mastery of concepts and principles
- Problem-solving skills
- Creativity
- Verbal skills
- Ability to take another person's perspective

FACTSHEET

Homework

Some ways to help homeless students complete their homework:

- Offer students the resource materials and supplies needed to complete homework assignments.
- Give students a "portable desk" to work from, which includes a clipboard, pencils, paper, and attachable light.
- Eliminate homework assignments that require a computer, television, telephone, transportation, fees, or adult supervision.
- Adjust homework assignments so that long-term work can be broken into shorter-term tasks with daily or weekly deadlines.
- Provide a place before and after school for students to complete their homework assignments.

TIPSHEET

Classroom Assessment

Some things teachers can do to effectively assess homeless students:

- Assess students in ways that don't require reading fluency, such as conversations and drawing pictures, and administer inventories that identify students' strengths and interests.
- Administer curriculum-embedded tasks and quick performance assessments.
- Assign students jobs and assess their performance.
- Use journal writing with prompts to elicit students' interests, life experiences, and writing skills.
- Have students talk into a tape recorder about their lives, interests, and school experiences.
- Conduct focused, private, and ongoing conversations with students, parents, and other service providers.
- Develop a report-card-in-progress to regularly communicate achievement.
- Maintain an updated inventory checklist of knowledge, skills, learning styles, and dispositions.
- Organize portfolios of students' work.
- Maintain an anecdotal record of impressions and professional judgments for ongoing review.
- Have available reading and mathematics assessments that can be administered upon an unplanned arrival or departure.

TIPSHEET

Desirable Characteristics of Assessments and Assessment Practices for Homeless and Other Highly Mobile Students

- Can be quickly administered upon unplanned arrival and departure.
- Measure knowledge and skills that allow for different learning styles and forms of expression.
- Link to classroom instructional targets and essential standards.
- Result in instructional decisionmaking to better engage students in learning.
- Are prescriptive, not punitive.
- Help teachers set short-term and long-term learning goals that are shared with students.
- Involve parents and students.
- Can be used continuously to provide rate-gain scores.
- Promote self-reflection for students and teachers.
- Provide generalizable information to teachers at other schools.
- Yield exemplars of student work.
- Minimize bias in all forms.
- Are relevant to the curricula and instructional program, and embedded in the current lessons.
- Are manageable and practical for the teacher to administer.
- Measure emotional well-being, attitudes, and dispositions.
- Are sound, valid, and reliable measures.
- Produce credible data.
- Can be used to advocate for the services and supports students need.

TIPSHEET

How Student Mobility Affects Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

- Disrupts the scope, sequence, and pacing of the curriculum.
- Requires teachers to backtrack in the curriculum.
- Causes children to be further marginalized from learning activities.
- Challenges teachers to experiment and expand their repertoire of instructional strategies to engage diverse learners.
- Creates a need for school-site and district processes to transition highly mobile students into classrooms at the appropriate grade levels, and in ways that don't stigmatize them for what they don't know (e.g., newcomer classrooms, diagnostic centers, transition rooms, student study teams).
- Pressures school communities to focus on high-stakes assessment scores over classroom-level assessment results.
- Demands that teachers view learning gains in the broader context of their students' life circumstances, particularly if school attendance is sporadic.
- Increases awareness of the utility of informal, classroom-level assessments (e.g., developmental assessments, quick assessments, conversation- and observation-based judgments, running records of progress).

TIPSHEET

Assessment for Students Exiting School

What does the next school need to know?

- The importance accorded by previously attended schools of creating continuity and coherence in their students' education experiences as they move from one school to another.
- Relevant information about students' life and school histories.
- Assessment results that identify strengths, gaps, interests, and dispositions.
- Specific data about mastery in reading and mathematics.
- Student diagnoses or special instructional, health, and social services received at other schools.
- Information about student learning modalities.
- Documentation of standardized test results.
- Information about personal and social skills development.
- How to access records from previously attended schools.

How can teachers at the next school be informed?

- Through personal contact from teachers and counselors at previously attended schools using the telephone, faxes, mail, e-mail, or Web site.
- Via a hard copy portfolio of student work or a portfolio-on-disk.
- Via videotaped student and teacher presentations.
- Via a standardized academic and behavioral rubric that easily conveys assessment results from multiple sources in a summary format.
- By establishing a toll-free number that lists all new student placements to facilitate tracking and teacher-to-teacher communication.
- By providing homeless families with a prepaid calling card that they can use to request previously attended schools to forward assessment and enrollment materials to the next school.
- By setting up electronic transfer systems across school, district, and state boundaries to enable schools to exchange assessment and vital enrollment information.

TIPSHEET

Behavior and Development

Conditions of Homelessness	Behaviorial Effects
Transiency and instability	Short attention span, frustration, aggression, possessiveness, difficulty with transitions, clinginess, need for instant gratification
Basic needs unmet	Hunger, illness, fatigue, poor hygiene, inadequate clothing, shame, pain, depression
Frequent change of school	Gaps in knowledge and skills, undiagnosed or untreated learning disabilities, resistance to bonding with peers or teachers, erratic attendance
Substandard living conditions	No privacy, few possessions, shame, fear, fatigue, inability to complete homework, loss of school supplies and books, limited opportunity for play, social isolation

FACTSHEET

Behavior Management

Some things teachers can do to foster positive classroom behavior in students experiencing homelessness:

- Follow a structured and predictable daily schedule to give students a sense of permanence and consistency.
- Have the same teacher in the classroom daily, and announce in advance, when possible, arrangements for a substitute teacher.
- Minimize the movement of classroom furniture.
- Allow students to hold on to their personal belongings throughout the day to allay their fear of losing their few possessions.
- Post and regularly review student-generated classroom rules and consequences.
- Find many reasons each day to offer authentic praise for each student's behavior.
- Facilitate age-appropriate friendships.
- Never punish students for behaviors beyond their control, such as erratic attendance, tardiness, sleepiness, or not completing homework assignments.
- Never punish students by taking away a possession, time with a friend, or play time.
- Never use food as a reward or punishment.

TIPSHEET

Developing Prosocial Skills

Some things teachers can do to foster prosocial skills and behaviors for students experiencing homelessness:

- Post and abide by student-generated classroom rules that include consequences that are respectful, reasonable, related to the behavior, and that reinforce personal responsibility.
- Encourage students to use self-imposed "time-outs," in which they voluntarily separate from the rest of the class for a reasonable period of time to express their feelings, talk with a neutral person, or quietly reflect upon the incident.
- Find regular and authentic reasons to offer students praise and encouragement.
- Teach students how to fight fairly by attacking the problem and not the person, which includes avoiding the use of threats, excuses, name-calling, and blaming.
- Teach students to be peacemakers by using conflict resolution skills.
- Conduct class meetings in which students and teachers engage in dialogue around issues of mutual concern, with the goal of solving problems.
- Never use threats, arguments, lectures, yelling, or sarcasm to address problem behaviors.
- Encourage self-expression through journal writing, talking into a tape recorder, or play therapy.
- Use literature to teach problem-solving skills and to promote effective ways to cope with feelings.
- Make referrals to professional mental health specialists.

TIPSHEET

Fighting Fair

Ways to attack a problem and not a person:

What to do…

- ✔ Find out what the problem is.
- ✔ Try to understand the problem from all sides.
- ✔ Listen to all the people involved.
- ✔ Attack the problem, not the person.
- ✔ Care about each other's feelings.
- ✔ Take responsibility for what's said and done.

And what not to do…

- ✔ Blame.
- ✔ Threaten.
- ✔ Get even.
- ✔ Make excuses.
- ✔ Tease.
- ✔ Name-call.

Adapted from: Garfield, S. (1999). *Educating our homeless youth: Creating a caring community in the classroom.* San Francisco, CA: WestEd.

TIPSHEET

When Conflict Occurs, Teachers Can...

- Be calm.
- Let students know that an adult is in charge.
- Identify the problem without blaming anyone.
- Encourage students to talk and acknowledge their feelings.
- Use affirmations.
- Avoid asking, "Why did you...?"
- Offer choices about how the situation can be resolved: ignore the problem, talk about it respectfully, agree with others about a solution, or ask for mediation.
- Use language that conveys caring.
- Reserve judgment.
- Remind students that if they fight, they should treat each other as people with feelings and not as enemies.
- Help students to understand that conflict involves others, and that together it can be resolved.
- Encourage students to create ways to resolve the conflict.
- Take the time to listen to all sides of the story.
- Look for a way so that everyone involved in the conflict wins.
- Suggest a gesture, like a hug or handshake, to indicate that the conflict is resolved.
- Use conflict as a way to teach and model life skills.
- Mediate when students come to you for help.

Adapted from: Garfield, S. (1999). *Educating our homeless youth: Creating a caring community in the classroom.* San Francisco, CA: WestEd.

TIPSHEET

Student Reactions to Homelessness and How Educators Can Respond

Constant Moving

Possible Reactions

- No apparent sense of roots, personal space, or possessions.
- Being restless and having difficulty completing tasks.
- Being clingy, aggressive, frustrated, and confused.
- Fighting to take control at school.

Suggested Responses

- Give students something that belongs to them; never punish them if they lose school materials.
- Divide assignments into small units; make contracts with students to complete tasks; never withhold recess or play time.
- Never take away possessions as a disciplinary measure; teach students to express their feelings and take voluntary time-outs.
- Give students classroom chores and appropriate choices; encourage students to be responsible for their personal space.

Frequent Change of Schools

Possible Reactions

- Resistant to forming relationships.
- Using withdrawal and introversion as self-defense.
- Depression.
- Falling behind in school; seemingly uncaring about school work.
- Having difficulties with transitions.

Suggested Responses

- Assign buddies; use cooperative learning and other group work techniques.
- Provide a consistent daily routine and clear expectations; use varying instructional modalities.
- Ensure successes and convey caring.
- Adapt homework; individualize instruction; ensure a challenging and relevant curriculum; make sure students receive education supports for which they're eligible.
- Keep assessment data current; prepare for student exiting; make sure he or she has time to say goodbye.

Unmet Basic Needs

Possible Reactions

- Reluctant to go to school.
- Feeling shame about their living situation and life circumstances.
- Suffering from frequent illnesses and hunger.
- Fatigue; short attention span.
- Experiencing developmental delays.

Suggested Responses

- Make sure students' clothing and hygiene needs are met.
- Keep students' living situation confidential; celebrate birthdays and holidays without costs to students.
- Make sure students are enrolled in food programs; keep nutritious snacks available.
- Allow students to rest or sleep.
- Make referrals; ensure adequate and enriched opportunities for play.

TIPSHEET

School Climate

The climate of the school is the feeling that pervades it all the time, every day. A positive school climate results from the following:

- An atmosphere of honesty and trust.
- A sense of connection and belonging to the school community.
- Involvement in decisionmaking.
- Kindness and encouragement from peers.
- Teachers with high energy and good morale.
- Relationships characterized by authenticity, fairness, compassion, and humor.
- Clear learning and behavior expectations.
- Cooperation, not competition.

FACTSHEET

A School Climate That Is Sensitive to Students Who Are Homeless

Some things teachers can do to ensure schools are caring places:

- Establish a buddy program so that all new students have an immediate friend and mentor.
- Operate a transition room where students become acquainted with the teacher and school before moving into their classroom; basic needs for food and supplies are met; and assessments of academic skills and emotional needs can be carried out.
- Design classroom space to be as homelike as possible, with plants, pets, couches, food, photographs of students, and student art displays.
- Assign homeless students personal space where they can safely store their belongings and retreat for privacy.
- Decorate the school hallways with bulletin boards that welcome families; display Polaroid pictures of all new students.
- Treat every day like it's the first day of school since homeless students often don't benefit from the transitioning that occurs during the first few days after school reopens.
- Assign highly mobile students daily chores such as taking care of pets, delivering attendance sheets to the office, shelving books, setting up art projects, or helping younger students during recess.
- Set up a fund to ensure that all students can participate in field trips, birthday parties, after-school events, and school picture programs, regardless of family resources.
- Plan farewell rituals for students exiting schools by giving them photographs of themselves and their friends, copies of their school work and other papers to facilitate school enrollment, stamped envelopes they can use to write to classmates, and time to say goodbye to friends and school staff.

FACTSHEET

Resilience

Schools can do many things to foster resilience in children and youth:

1. **Schools can foster resilience through relationships by**
   - Supporting teacher collaboration.
   - Limiting the number of students in classes to facilitate close personal and working relationships.
   - Increasing opportunities for parents to be involved in the school community.
   - Encouraging the use of peer learning activities.

2. **Schools can foster resilience through curriculum by**
   - Supporting curricular enrichment opportunities such as art, music, vocational training, school-based enterprises, apprenticeships, and community service.
   - Promoting a curriculum that values racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity, and advances gender and cultural equity.
   - Resisting efforts to "dumb down" learning activities.

3. **Schools can foster resilience through instruction by**
   - Promoting increased opportunities for teachers to facilitate lessons rather than to instruct didactically.
   - Supporting teachers' efforts to individualize instructional strategies to accommodate the broad range of students' learning styles, life experiences, personal strengths, and interests.

4. **Schools can foster resilience through grouping practices by**
   - Using mixed ability groups.
   - Ensuring inclusive group practices such as mainstreaming, cooperative learning, and peer tutoring.

5. **Schools can foster resilience through evaluation practices by**
   - Supporting teachers' use of performance assessments and the continuous review of student work.
   - Encouraging students to develop personal assessment skills such as self-reflection and participating in their own performance reviews.

Adapted from: Berliner, B. & Benard, B. (1995). *More than a message of hope: A district-level policymaker's guide to understanding resiliency.* San Francisco: WestEd.

FACTSHEET

Creating a School Climate That Fosters Resilience

Human Needs	Conditions	Outcomes
■ Safety, basic needs	■ Caring relationships	■ Social competence
■ Love, belonging	■ High expectations	■ Problem-solving abilities, resourcefulness
■ Respect	■ Opportunities to participate in meaningful activities, contribute to community	■ Autonomy
■ Accomplishment		■ Positive sense of purpose, future oriented
■ Power		
■ Meaning		

Adapted from: Berliner, B. & Benard, B. (1995). *More than a message of hope: A district-level policymaker's guide to understanding resiliency.* San Francisco: WestEd.

FACTSHEET

Moving Schools from Risk to Resilience

Risk		Resilience
Relationships are hierarchical, blaming, controlling.	➠	**Relationships** are caring and promote positive expectations and participation.
Curriculum is fragmented, non-experiential, limited, and exclusive of multiple perspectives.	➠	**Curriculum** is thematic, experiential, challenging, comprehensive, and inclusive of multiple perspectives.
Instruction focuses on a narrow range of learning styles, builds from perceptions of student deficits, and is authoritarian.	➠	**Instruction** focuses on a broad range of learning styles; builds from perceptions of student strengths, interests, and experiences; and is participatory and facilitative.
Grouping is tracked by perceptions of ability; promotes individual competition and a sense of alienation.	➠	**Grouping** is not tracked by perceptions of ability; promotes cooperation, shared responsibility, and a sense of belonging.
Evaluation focuses on a limited range of intelligences, uses only standardized tests, and assumes only one correct answer.	➠	**Evaluation** focuses on multiple intelligences, uses authentic assessments, and fosters self-reflection.

Adapted from: Berliner, B. & Benard, B. (1995). *More than a message of hope: A district-level policymaker's guide to understanding resiliency.* San Francisco: WestEd.

TIPSHEET

Health and Well-Being

Homeless children's health is compromised in many ways:

- Unhealthy living conditions.
- Stress of transient lifestyle and living without a permanent shelter.
- Lack of ongoing preventive and routine care.
- Delayed treatment.
- Poor nutrition.

The trauma of homelessness affects children's cognitive and emotional development:

- Infants and toddlers develop more slowly.
- Preschoolers have serious emotional problems.
- School-age children have high rates of mental health problems.
- Traumatic events dominate children's lives.

Homelessness devastates families in many ways:

- Extreme poverty.
- Poor health.
- Illiteracy.
- Violence.
- Substance abuse.
- Children placed in foster care.
- Jail.

Adapted from: The Better Homes Fund. (1999). *America's new outcasts: Homeless children.* Newton, MA: The Better Homes Fund.

FACTSHEET

Barriers for Homeless Students

School Barriers	Shelter Barriers	Family Barriers	Social and Emotional Barriers	Physical Barriers
■ Poor reading, writing, and math skills	■ Lack of privacy	■ Lack of money	■ Low self-esteem	■ Lack of medical care
■ Falling behind grade level	■ Lack of help with homework	■ Lack of permanent housing	■ Emotional trauma	■ Lack of personal hygiene
■ Lack of transportation	■ Lack of space to study	■ Family instability	■ Lack of self-confidence	■ Lack of sleep
■ Cost of supplies	■ Too much noise	■ Family violence	■ Shame	■ Hunger
■ Developmental delays	■ Lack of homework materials	■ Caring for siblings	■ Fear	■ Substance abuse
■ Need for immunizations	■ Limited access to a telephone	■ Family illiteracy	■ Depression	■ Lack of clothing
■ Attendance rules	■ Shelter inconvenient to school and friends	■ Keeping children out of school	■ Unhappiness	
■ Transferring schools	■ Unsafe living quarters	■ Family substance abuse		
	■ Frequent moves	■ Family seeking employment		

FACTSHEET

Assessing Curriculum and Instruction

Audience: Teachers and administrators

Purpose: Participants assess current teaching practices to consider how curricular and instructional practices can facilitate learning for highly mobile students.

Preparation: Make a copy of the Assessing Curriculum and Instruction worksheet on page 117 for each participant.

Equipment and Materials: Handouts

Procedure:

1. Have participants work in pairs or small groups to answer each question and consider what changes or additions to current practice could result in better meeting the needs of highly mobile students.

2. Bring the groups together and facilitate a discussion about everyone's ratings and suggestions for improvement.

Time: Approximately 30 minutes

Assessing Curriculum and Instruction

Does your school, classroom, or tutoring program teach lessons that…			**What can you do to improve the curriculum?**
Build upon student interests?	Yes	No	
Are relevant to students' lives?	Yes	No	
Convey high expectations?	Yes	No	
Are taught as "minilessons"?	Yes	No	
Are based upon big themes?	Yes	No	
Promote self-expression?	Yes	No	
Infuse life skills?	Yes	No	
Allow for completion?	Yes	No	
Affirm native languages/cultures?	Yes	No	
Align school and shelter activities?	Yes	No	
Does your school, classroom, or tutoring program use instructional strategies that…			**What can you do to improve instruction?**
Eliminate ability grouping?	Yes	No	
Use mastery learning techniques?	Yes	No	
Tailor instruction to students' needs?	Yes	No	
Eliminate homework barriers?	Yes	No	
Encourage self-expression?	Yes	No	
Apply learning-style theory?	Yes	No	
Use technology?	Yes	No	
Promote language development?	Yes	No	
Teach learning readiness skills?	Yes	No	
Use heterogeneous grouping?	Yes	No	

Developing a Report-Card-in-Progress

Audience: Teachers

Purpose: Teachers will engage in the development of an informal assessment and reporting system that can be readily and easily communicated to families in transition and to new and prospective teachers.

Preparation: Make a copy of the Sample Report-Card-in-Progress on page 119 for each participant.

Equipment and Materials:

Handouts

Blank paper for each group

Procedure:

1. Have participants work in small groups, revising the Sample Report-Card-in-Progress to develop an assessment and reporting system that reflect the school's needs.
2. Bring the groups together and facilitate a discussion of how different groups revised and amended the sample.
3. Conclude by encouraging teachers to produce and use this kind of interim report card.

Time: Approximately 1 hour

Sample Report-Card-in-Progress

Student Information:

Name _____ Birth Date _____

Teacher _____ Grade Level _____

Date Enrolled _____ Date Transferred _____

Parent/Guardian _____ New School Name _____

Attendance

____ Regular
____ Absent occasionally
____ Absent often

Homework

____ Completed regularly
____ Completed occasionally
____ Never completed

Academic Information:

Reading
Strengths…
Working on…

Writing/Spelling
Strengths…
Working on…

Mathematics
Strengths…
Working on…

Science
Strengths…
Working on…

Social Studies
Strengths…
Working on…

Teacher Comments (including academic performance, social adjustment, interests, and special needs or services):

Test _____ Date _____ Score _____

Test _____ Date _____ Score _____

Developing a Weekly Student Self-Evaluation Form

Audience: Teachers

Purpose: Participants will develop a self-evaluation form that students can use to track their achievements, and which can be used to communicate progress to parents.

Preparation: Make a copy of the Sample Weekly Student Self-Evaluation Form on page 121 for each participant.

Equipment and Materials:

Handouts

Blank paper for each group

Procedure:

1. Have participants work in small groups and use the sample self-evaluation form as a model for creating a form students in their own classrooms can use to assess their own progress and to accurately record weekly milestones.
2. Bring the groups together and facilitate a whole group sharing of the forms each group developed. Encourage participants to produce and use this kind of assessment tool.

Time: Approximately 45 minutes

Sample Weekly Student Self-Evaluation Form

Name _____ Date _____ Grade _____

1. Here are some things I've done this week:

2. Here are three things I've learned this week:

3. This week I'm trying to learn:

4. This week I'm most proud of:

5. I'm currently reading:

6. Next week I plan to work on:

Student comments

_____

_____

Teacher comments

_____

_____

Parent comments

_____

_____

Adapted from: Garfield, S. (1999). *Educating our homeless youth: Creating a caring community in the classroom.* San Francisco, CA: WestEd.

Developing a Welcoming Mission Statement

Audience: School personnel, parents, and community members

Purpose: Participants will engage as a community in developing a school mission statement that makes all families feel a sense of belonging and that conveys high expectations for all students.

Preparation: Make a copy of the Developing a Welcoming Mission Statement worksheet on page 123 for each participant.

Equipment and Materials:

Handouts

Blank paper for each group

Procedure:

1. Have participants work in pairs or small groups to answer the worksheet prompts.
2. Have groups use their answers to the prompts to each draft a mission statement that makes all families feel a sense of belonging to the school community and that conveys high expectations for all students.
3. Bring the groups together and encourage groups to share their drafts with the whole group for review and discussion. Try to reach a consensus about elements to include in a new school mission statement.
4. Conclude by asking for volunteers who will draft a mission statement that reflects the group consensus.

Time: Approximately 1 hour

Developing a Welcoming Mission Statement

Answer the following prompts before drafting your mission statement:

1. The administrators, teachers, parents, and students of our school believe that all students…

2. The administrators, teachers, parents, and students of our school aim to create a school climate that is…

3. The administrators, teachers, parents, and students of our school work hard to…

4. The administrators, teachers, parents, and students of our school hold ourselves accountable to…

5. Draft a mission statement for your school!

Developing a Behavior Compact

Audience: School personnel

Purpose: Participants draft letters that declare the school rules and consequences for their violation as a way to begin the process of developing a behavior compact among the principal, teachers, students, and parents.

Preparation: Make a copy of the Sample Behavior Compact on page 125 for each participant.

Equipment and Materials:

Handouts

Blank paper for each pair or group

Procedure:

1. Have participants work in pairs or small groups to add, delete, and/or revise the rules and consequences on the Sample Behavior Compact to reflect what your school community believes, values, and expects from one another.
2. Bring the groups together to discuss their new or revised behavior compacts.
3. Conclude by encouraging the school community to produce and use this kind of behavior compact.

Time: Approximately 1 hour

Sample Behavior Compact

Dear Parents and Students,

At our school, the education, health, happiness, and well-being of all our students is important. The following is a copy of our rules and the consequences for their violation. Please review this letter together, sign it, and return it to school. Thank you.

Our School Rules *(for example)*

Inside the School ***(for example)***	**Outside on the Playground** ***(for example)***
1. Share. 2. Cooperate. 3. Treat others the way you want to be treated. 4. Follow directions. 5. Be respectful about differences. 6. Solve conflicts peacefully. 7. Keep your hands to yourself. 8. No yelling or offensive language.	1. Help others. 2. Take turns. 3. No throwing sand, rocks, sticks. 4. Play cooperatively. 5. Make sure everyone is safe. 6. No running into the street. 7. Ask for help from an adult.

Our Consequences *(for example)*

1st violation: Receive a warning from the teacher

2nd violation: Time-out

3rd violation: Meet with the principal

4th violation: Call parents

5th violation: After-school consequences (e.g., work detail)

6th violation: Parent conference

If everyone follows these rules, our school will be a safe, happy, and successful place for learning, working, and playing.

Please solve all problems with words. Any student or adult who engages in a physical fight will be sent immediately to the school office for mediation and conflict resolution.

I have read and understand these rules and consequences:

Principal _____

Teacher _____

Parent _____

Student _____

Chapter 4: Not Schools Alone

FAMILY HOMELESSNESS IS MORE THAN FAMILIES LACKING HOUSING. It's about children being raised without homes and the trauma that produces for them.

Schools alone can't solve the complex problems faced by children experiencing homelessness. Children's health, well-being, and academic success largely depend upon a vast system of community services for families, with schools at the center because of their ongoing relationship with children.

Involving Families in Their Children's School Life

Parents from all walks of life want their children to succeed in school. Whatever their struggles, almost all parents want to support the learning that takes place at school and to develop their children's character, compassion, and creativity. When families are involved in their children's school life, children achieve higher grades and test scores, have better attendance, complete homework more often, exhibit more positive attitudes and behaviors, reach graduation at higher rates, and enroll more frequently in higher education. Parents and guardians can make their values clear about the importance of learning, good work habits, and positive character traits. They can set high expectations for their children and support them in meeting them. And they can monitor their children's academic progress and after-school activities.

Being involved in their children's school lives isn't always easy for families. Time during the school day is limited for working parents, language and cultural barriers can impede family-school contact, and uncertainty about how to help can overshadow good intentions. For families without a home, becoming part of a school community and involved in their children's learning are even greater challenges. Homeless parents are often distracted by the need to find shelter, safety, and food. And many are ill-prepared by their own lack of basic literacy and math skills to read to their children and assist with their homework. Parents who lack confidence in their own skills or have experienced failure in school are frequently reluctant to be involved in their children's education.

Tutoring for Success

For children and youth whose transiency and poverty result in inconsistent schooling and little extracurricular enrichment, academic tutoring can reinforce good learning habits, identify and remediate learning problems, and foster educational success. Tutoring is a structured way to

individualize and enrich instruction and can be offered at schools, shelters, social service agencies, libraries, and parks. Tutoring can't take the place of classroom learning, but it can greatly enhance children's learning by

- engaging them in the learning process,
- improving basic academic skills,
- providing reliable homework assistance, and
- boosting self-confidence and self-worth.

Homeless students are often behind grade level in their studies. If they pass through the primary grades without mastering gateway knowledge and skills, particularly in reading and mathematics, they can experience defeat and school failure. Successful tutoring involves designing and delivering a focused program that accounts for the conditions homeless children experience, builds upon their strengths and interests, presents content using various instructional strategies, promotes academic achievement, and increases confidence and pride.

Partnering with Social Service Providers

The impetus for families, schools, and community agencies to work together is a recognition that poor education, health, and social outcomes for children result in part from service delivery systems not responding comprehensively and in a coordinated way to meet the needs of families without homes. By working together as partners, they can design strategies that respond to local conditions more effectively and use community resources more efficiently. The intent is to

- help families by leveraging resources and building relationships;
- resolve immediate problems and develop strategies to avoid future crises;
- accommodate the inter-relatedness of family needs by designing and delivering services that are comprehensive and coordinated;
- build collaboration among family-, school-, and community-serving agencies;
- involve community stakeholders in planning and delivering services;
- eliminate language, cultural, transportation, and other barriers to services; and
- work toward improving long-term conditions of families and communities.

For families without homes, one of the most important partnerships is between schools and shelters. Volunteer and professional shelter workers are key to brokering, securing, and delivering services and resources for homeless families. Given the complexity of homelessness and the interrelated needs of families in crisis, the work of shelter workers often interfaces with numerous other government and community-based groups, especially schools. Since shelter workers can develop intimate and sustained relationships with families, they know what services families need and receive; they facilitate school enrollment, attendance, special services, and tutoring support; and they oversee the case management of family support services.

Working Together and Ways to Make It Happen

Working together is a strategy that involves families, schools, and community agencies to prevent families from "falling through the cracks" and to improve the life outcomes of homeless children and youth. Partnerships, collaborations, alliances, and other ways of working together aim to develop comprehensive solutions to the complex problems of persistent poverty, transiency, homelessness, and school failure. There are a number of critical ways for parents to develop their children's learning habits, and for community agencies to promote the health, well-being, and academic success of homeless children and youth:

1. Parent Education

The limited education of many homeless parents can be a barrier to involvement in their children's education and can diminish their children's school experiences. For parents to nurture, teach, and advocate on behalf of their children, they first of all need their own basic human needs met, they need basic academic skills and knowledge, and they need confidence that they have something to contribute to their children's school success.

What Works

- ✔ Partnering with other agencies to address basic food, safety, and shelter needs so parents' learning experiences aren't distracted by crises.
- ✔ Making parents feel comfortable by creating learning environments that don't resemble schools and are located in places that are easily accessible and welcoming.
- ✔ Breaking down barriers to participation by providing child care, food, transportation, translation, and other services.
- ✔ Incorporating a continuum of learning and advancement that includes literacy, adult basic education, General Equivalency Diploma or alternative high school preparation, referrals to higher education, job training, job placement, and life skills training.
- ✔ Developing a curriculum specifically for homeless parents that is relevant to their lives, interactive, scaled for all levels of literacy, and flexible to accommodate intermittent participation.

2. Family Literacy

The goal of family literacy is to help parents who are new readers break the cycle of illiteracy in their own families by sharing with their children the joy and value of reading, while developing their own reading and writing skills. For many nonreading homeless parents, reading as a part of everyday life was not a part of their childhood. By engaging in organized educational activities with their children, parents further develop their skills and gain confidence in being their children's "first teachers."

What Works

- ✔ Partnering with local libraries, which often have established family literacy or adult literacy programs.
- ✔ Providing space at shelters and schools for parents to participate in free, supervised educational activities with their children.
- ✔ Partnering with other agencies to set up shelter- and school-based family literacy programs.
- ✔ Giving families free books to build their own family libraries.
- ✔ Helping families participate in community literacy events like storytelling times at libraries.
- ✔ Building libraries at family shelters.

3. Getting Families Involved

There are many ways parents can participate in their children's education, both at home and school. For families without a private and permanent residence, supporting children's learning is challenging and often impeded by the chaos of homelessness, the limitations of shelter life, and the lack of confidence to be part of a school community.

What Works

- ✔ Ensuring children are enrolled and attend school.
- ✔ Taking an active role in home learning activities such as reading, playing, and talking together; monitoring the amount of children's television viewing and the content of programming; establishing a daily family routine; scheduling homework time; and monitoring after-school activities.
- ✔ Supervising the completion of homework.
- ✔ Being an audience for school events.
- ✔ Participating and supporting school events.
- ✔ Modeling continuous learning.
- ✔ Linking school and family learning by developing a portfolio of children's work produced during nonschool hours to be shared with teachers.
- ✔ Communicating with teachers and other school staff.
- ✔ Volunteering to help in the classroom.

4. Designing Effective Tutoring Sessions

Most tutors who work with homeless children and youth are volunteers and have limited access to curricula, training, and ongoing support. A well-designed tutoring program both enhances student learning and helps the tutor provide effective instruction.

What Works

- ✔ Setting up a quiet and safe place to meet.
- ✔ Working with one student at a time if possible.
- ✔ Designing sessions to support classroom instruction.
- ✔ Establishing positive relationships with students.
- ✔ Recruiting tutors who are energetic, dependable, patient, nonjudgmental, and good communicators; who enjoy children and youth; and who believe all children are capable of learning.
- ✔ Building on student strengths and interests.
- ✔ Using a variety of instructional strategies.
- ✔ Including reading, writing, and speaking activities.
- ✔ Targeting learning areas that need strengthening.
- ✔ Ensuring communication among shelter tutors, school tutors, teachers, and parents.
- ✔ Planning sessions in advance and preparing materials.
- ✔ Recording notes about the strengths and limitations of each session.
- ✔ Listing points to remember for the following session.
- ✔ Scheduling follow-up tutoring sessions.
- ✔ Keeping a lively pace.
- ✔ Scheduling sessions up to 30 minutes.
- ✔ Finding reasons to offer honest praise and encouragement.

5. Establishing Links among Families, Schools, and Social Services

Working together is a strategy that leverages local resources to meet specific needs of families. It's a way to find answers to complex problems that families, schools, or social service agencies couldn't accomplish alone. For families whose lives intersect with schools, shelters, and social service agencies, partnerships can promote services and supports that meet their immediate and basic needs, as well as address long-term goals of stability and permanent housing.

What Works

- ✔ Building upon local resources and being responsive to specific family needs.
- ✔ Balancing prevention with the immediacy of attending to basic needs.
- ✔ Providing training and support for all partners to effectively work together.
- ✔ Developing strategies that eliminate barriers to participation and accommodate the various languages, cultures, lifestyles, levels of education, and work schedules of partners.
- ✔ Being flexible in the design of partnerships.
- ✔ Capitalizing upon training, assistance, and funding offered by schools, districts, community-based organizations, postsecondary institutions, private foundations, and state education agencies.
- ✔ Recognizing that partnerships are complex and that it takes time to establish trust among members, draw in stakeholders, earn successes, and resolve challenges as they arise.
- ✔ Assessing efforts to determine how well the partnership operates and what it has accomplished.

MATERIALS & ACTIVITIES

Chapter 4: Not Schools Alone

"When families are involved in their children's education, children earn higher grades and receive higher scores on tests, attend school more regularly, complete more homework, demonstrate more positive attitudes and behaviors, graduate from high school at higher rates, and are more likely to enroll in higher education than students with less involved families."

From: Funkhouser, J. & Gonzalez, M. (1998). *Family involvement in children's education: Successful local approaches — an idea book.* Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates, Inc.

OVERHEAD

"Parent involvement is the support and participation of parents at home, in the community, and at the school site that directly and positively affects the educational performance of children and improves the quality of education offered to children. Parent involvement is most successful when it is viewed, practiced, and promoted as a partnership between home and school."

From: California Department of Education

OVERHEAD

Ways for Parents to Become Involved

Effective ways for parents to support their children's learning:

1. Know your children's teachers.
2. Become a partner with school staff.
3. Help with school activities.
4. Support your children at home and at school.
5. Teach your children that learning and schoolwork are important.
6. Take an active role in making school decisions.
7. Read to your children.
8. Encourage your children to read.
9. Monitor your children's television viewing.
10. Establish a regular time for doing homework.
11. Set high expectations for your children.
12. Encourage your children to participate in learning activities outside of school.
13. Help your children participate in developmentally appropriate arts, sports, and other programming.
14. Help your children gain access to technology that enhances learning.

From: California Department of Education

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Title I Family-School Partnerships

Title I Family-School Partnerships include:

- Sharing responsibility between homes and schools to improve student performance.
- Building capacity for increased parental involvement through training and support.
- Parent involvement in policy development at the school and district levels.

All Title I schools have a written parent involvement policy that must describe the following:

- Annual parent meetings.
- Flexible other meetings for parents.
- Involvement in planning, reviewing, and improving school programs.
- Exchanging information between home and school in a timely way.
- Distributing information in appropriate languages.
- Ensuring ways for parents to provide input to school matters.
- Assistance in understanding national education goals, state standards, assessments, and their children's progress.
- Training for parents to help children learn.
- Training school staff to involve parents.
- Clarifying the roles of community-based organizations.

Six Types of Parent Involvement

1. **PARENTING** — creating home environments that support learning through:
   - Parenting classes
   - Newsletters
   - Handouts

   Results for parents:
   - ✔ Increased confidence in parenting
   - ✔ Support from other parents

2. **COMMUNICATING** — effective ways to exchange home-school information through:
   - Parent conferences
   - Newsletters
   - Notices
   - Phone calls

   Results for parents:
   - ✔ Better understanding of school policies and programs
   - ✔ Increased awareness of children's development

3. **VOLUNTEERING** — organizing parent help and support in the school through:
   - School and classroom volunteer programs
   - Surveying parents for time, talents, and interests
   - Establishing a parent volunteer workroom

   Results for parents:
   - ✔ Awareness that families are welcomed and valued at school
   - ✔ Carryover of school activities at home

4. **LEARNING AT HOME** — providing information and ideas to families about helping students with homework and other activities through:
   - Hosting family reading, science, and math programs
   - Informing parents about homework policies and strategies
   - Encouraging discussion of school work at home

   Results for parents:
   - ✔ Increased ability to support and encourage students at home
   - ✔ Better understanding of the instructional program

5. **DECISIONMAKING** — including parents in school decisions and developing parent leaders through:
   - Involving parents on committees, on advisory groups, and in reform activities

   Results for parents:
   - ✔ Input to school policies
   - ✔ Feeling connected to the school community

6. **COLLABORATING** — integrating resources and services from the community to strengthen families by:
   - Providing information to families about community resources and activities

   Results for parents:
   - ✔ Increased knowledge of local resources
   - ✔ Increased awareness of the school's role in the community

From: Epstein, J. L., Salinas, K. C., Sanders, M.G., & Simon, B. S. (1997). *School, family and community partnerships: Your handbook of action.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

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The PTA Parent Involvement Standards

Standard I: Communication
Communication between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful.

1. Use a variety of communication tools on a regular basis, seeking to facilitate two-way interaction through each type of medium.
2. Establish opportunities for parents and educators to share partnering information such as student strengths and learning preferences.
3. Provide clear information regarding course expectations and offerings, student placement, school activities, student services, and optional programs.
4. Mail report cards and regular progress reports to parents. Provide support services and follow-up conferences as needed.
5. Disseminate information on school reforms, policies, discipline procedures, assessment tools, and school goals; and include parents in any related decisionmaking process.
6. Conduct conferences with parents at least twice a year, with follow-up as needed. These should accommodate the varied schedules of parents, language barriers, and the need for child care.
7. Encourage immediate contact between parents and teachers when concerns arise.
8. Distribute student work for parental comment and review on a regular basis.
9. Translate communications to assist non-English-speaking parents.
10. Communicate with parents regarding positive student behavior and achievement, not just regarding misbehavior or failure.
11. Provide opportunities for parents to communicate with principals and other administrative staff.
12. Promote informal activities at which parents, staff, and community members can interact.
13. Provide staff development regarding effective communication techniques and the importance of regular two-way communication between the school and the family.

Standard II: Parenting
Parenting skills are promoted and supported.

1. Communicate the importance of positive relationships between parents and their children.
2. Link parents to programs and resources within the community that provide support services to families.
3. Reach out to all families, not just those who attend parent meetings.
4. Establish policies that support and respect family responsibilities, recognizing the variety of parenting traditions and practices within the community's diverse cultural and religious groups.
5. Provide accessible parent/family information and resource center to support parents and families with training, resources, and other services.
6. Encourage staff members to demonstrate respect for families and the family's primary role in the rearing of children to become responsible adults.

Standard III: Student Learning
Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning.

1. Seek and encourage parental participation in decisionmaking that affects students.
2. Inform parents of the expectations for students in each subject at each grade level.
3. Provide information regarding how parents can foster learning at home, give appropriate assistance, monitor homework, and give feedback to teachers.
4. Regularly assign interactive homework that will require students to discuss and interact with their parents about what they are learning in class.
5. Sponsor workshops or distribute information to assist parents in understanding how students can improve skills, get help when needed, meet class expectations, and perform well on assessments.
6. Involve parents in setting student goals each year and in planning for postsecondary education and

> over

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careers. Encourage the development of a personalized education plan for each student, in which parents are full partners.
7. Provide opportunities for staff members to learn and share successful approaches to engaging parents in their child's education.

Standard IV: Volunteering

Parents are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are sought.

1. Ensure that office staff greetings, signage near the entrances, and any other interaction with parents create a climate in which parents feel valued and welcome.
2. Survey parents regarding their interests, talents, and availability; then coordinate the parent resources with those that exist within the school and among the faculty.
3. Ensure that parents who are unable to volunteer in the school building are given options for helping in other ways, such as at their home or place of employment.
4. Organize an easy, accessible program for using parent volunteers, providing ample training on volunteer procedures and school protocol.
5. Develop a system for contacting all parents to assist as the year progresses.
6. Design opportunities for those with limited time and resources to participate by addressing child care, transportation, work schedule needs, and so forth.
7. Show appreciation for parents' participation, and value their diverse contributions.
8. Educate and assist staff members in creating an inviting climate and effectively using volunteer resources.
9. Ensure that volunteer activities are meaningful and built on volunteer interests and abilities.

Standard V: School Decision-making and Advocacy

Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families.

1. Provide understandable, accessible, and well-publicized processes for influencing decisions, raising issues or concerns, appealing decisions, and resolving problems.
2. Encourage the formation of PTAs or other parent groups to identify and respond to issues of interest to parents.
3. Include parents on all decisionmaking and advisory committees, and ensure adequate training for such areas as policy, curriculum, budget, school reform initiatives, safety, and personnel. When site governance bodies exist, give equal representation to parents.
4. Provide parents with current information regarding school policies, practices, and student and school performance data.
5. Enable parents to participate as partners when setting school goals, developing and evaluating programs and policies, or responding to performance data.
6. Encourage and facilitate active parent participation in the decisions that affect students, such as student placement, course selection, and individual personalized education plans.
7. Treat parental concerns with respect and demonstrate genuine interest in developing solutions.
8. Promote parent participation on school, district, state, and national committees and issues.
9. Provide training for staff and parents on collaborative partnering and shared decisionmaking.

Standard VI: Collaborating with the Community

Community resources are used to strengthen schools, families, and student learning.

1. Distribute information regarding cultural, recreational, academic, health, social, and other resources that serve families within the community.
2. Develop partnerships with local businesses and service groups to advance student learning and assist schools and families.
3. Encourage employers to adopt policies and practices that promote and support adult participation in children's education.
4. Foster student participation in community service.
5. Involve community members in school volunteer programs.
6. Disseminate information to the school community, including those without school-age children, regarding school programs and performance.
7. Collaborate with community agencies to provide family support services and adult learning opportunities, enabling parents to more fully participate in activities that support education.
8. Inform staff members of the resources available in the community and strategies for using those resources.

Family Involvement in Schools

Issues that need to be addressed to effectively link families to schools:

1. Overcoming time and resource constraints.
2. Providing information and training to parents and school staff.
3. Restructuring schools to support family involvement.
4. Bridging school-family differences.
5. Tapping external supports for partnerships.

Adapted from: Funkhouser, J. & Gonzalez, M. (1998). *Family involvement in children's education: Successful local approaches — an idea book.* Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates, Inc.

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Shelters and Family Involvement

Shelter workers can do several things to link families to schools:

1. Inform families about their right and responsibility to enroll children in school and ensure their regular attendance.
2. Serve as a liaison to facilitate school enrollment, attendance, and parent participation in meetings and events.
3. Broker social services to have the basic needs of families met.
4. Arrange for transportation for families to participate in school-based or community-based activities and services.
5. Regularly communicate with schools to facilitate parent-teacher communication about student progress, needs, opportunities, and services.
6. Co-locate services and programs at shelters.
7. Provide child care so parents can attend school meetings and events.
8. Accommodate student learning needs by providing a clean, safe, well-lit space in shelters to read and do homework, and by arranging for shelter-based tutoring.
9. Establish a shelter library and parent resource center.
10. Help secure needed school supplies.
11. Ensure that school communications are translated into languages that parents understand.

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Helping Children Become Readers

Families can do several things to help children learn to read:

1. Make time to talk with and listen to your children.
   - Talk about what you are doing and what you have done. Listen and respond to your children. Good listeners and talkers are likely to become strong readers.

2. Share family stories with your children.
   - Your children will enjoy hearing about your cultural and family history, values, and traditions.

3. Praise your children.
   - Point out the many things your children do well. Most children learn grammar, spelling, and pronunciation naturally when they are encouraged to listen, speak, read, and write.

4. Encourage reading and writing at home.
   - Create special places for reading and writing. Store books and paper where children can reach them.
   - Read aloud to your children every day and when they ask to hear a story.
   - Write a story together using words and drawings from magazine scraps.

5. Be a reading and writing model.
   - Write simple messages that your children can read — put a note in their backpack, make a coupon good for a kiss or other treat, write them a thank you note.
   - Read aloud articles from newspapers or magazines.
   - Let your children see you read and write. Read aloud what you have written — a shopping list, letter, or note on a calendar.

6. Read and write everywhere you go.
   - Bring books when you do errands.
   - Read aloud words on signs, letters, food packages, menus, and billboards.

Adapted from: Koralek, D. & Collins, R. (1997). *On the road to reading: A guide for community partners.* Washington, DC: The Corporation for National Service.

TIPSHEET

Ways to Promote Family Literacy

Many literacy projects can be organized in your community:

1. A reading room in shelters where parents can find reading materials on child development, caregiving, and education.
2. Mobile libraries or lending libraries in shelters or schools to encourage parents to check out books to read to their children.
3. Writing cases — plastic briefcases that families can borrow that include paper, pencils, art supplies, magazines, scissors, stapler, and glue — that are intended to foster family writing projects.
4. A homework hotline for parents and students to receive homework assistance.
5. A book program that allows families to keep books to build a private collection.
6. Shelter-based workshops to help parents learn to support their children's reading and writing.

TIPSHEET

Guidelines for Successful Partnerships

Strong partnerships depend upon local interests, needs, and resources as well as following these general guidelines for working together:

1. **There's not a one-size-fits-all approach to partnership development:** partnerships should be built upon and responsive to local strengths, needs, and resources.
2. **Partnerships should focus on the needs of children and their families:** they should be prevention-oriented without neglecting immediate needs.
3. **Training and staff development is an essential investment:** knowledge and skills are needed to effectively work together and to work toward improving the well-being and achievement of children and youth.
4. **Communication is the foundation of effective partnerships:** strategies must eliminate barriers to participation and accommodate varied languages, cultures, levels of education, lifestyles, and work schedules of school, community, and family partners.
5. **Flexibility and diversity are key:** partnerships can take many appropriate and effective forms.
6. **Partnerships should capitalize upon training, assistance, and funding offered by sources other than schools:** partnerships can tap resources available through school districts, community-based organizations, postsecondary institutions, private foundations, and state education agencies.
7. **Change takes time:** partnerships must recognize the complexity of working together and take time to establish trust, draw in the needed stakeholders, earn successes, and resolve challenges as they arise.
8. **Partnerships should assess their efforts:** multiple indicators can be used to determine how well the partnership operates and what it has accomplished.

Adapted from: Funkhouser, J. & Gonzalez, M. (1998). *Family involvement in children's education: Successful local approaches — an idea book.* Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates, Inc.

TIPSHEET

Three Easy and Important Things Parents Can Do Every Day

1. Send children to school.
2. Make sure children read or are read to.
3. Monitor what children watch on television, and for how long.

TIPSHEET

Getting to Know Homeless Families

There are several ways to get to know families without homes:

- Spend time with families wherever they are living.
- Avoid judging a family's situation.
- Recognize that homelessness creates chaos, instability, fear, and shame.
- Be sensitive to language and literacy issues.
- Serve as an information resource.
- Be a friend.

TIPSHEET

Basic Tips for Tutors

- Focus on the individual learning needs of students.
- Have fun — play can establish positive relationships.
- Help students establish friendships.
- Plan each tutoring session as if it were the last.
- Show students and families that you care.
- Always find something praiseworthy about students' efforts and performances.

TIPSHEET

Building a Tutoring Relationship

1. Establish Trust and Respect
   - Get to know your students.
   - Show interest in their lives.

2. Don't Talk Too Much
   - Engage students in open-ended discussion.
   - Ask questions students can answer.
   - Allow enough "wait time."

3. Help Students to Think Independently
   - Encourage students to reveal their thinking and reasoning process.
   - Listen to their logic.

4. Encourage Discussion
   - Let students talk.

5. Focus on the Learning Process
   - Create opportunities for students to predict answers to questions.

6. Be Honest and Supportive
   - Give good, constructive feedback.
   - Create a climate of safety and support.
   - Promote confidence.

7. Capitalize on Interests
   - Develop lessons on topics of interest to students.
   - Observe students when they communicate about topics of interest.

Adapted from: Hermann, B. (Ed.) (1994). *The volunteer tutor's toolbox.* Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

The Two Guiding Principles of Tutoring

Principle 1: Establish a caring and encouraging learning environment

- ✔ Get to know the students:
  - Talk with them, not to them.
  - Ask open-ended questions.
  - Provide adequate "wait time" for answering questions.
  - Show an interest in their lives.
  - Build activities around their interests.
  - Use positive nonverbal gestures.
  - Demonstrate cultural sensitivity.
  - Give students something to keep that reminds them of your work together.
- ✔ Give specific praise:
  - Be positive, accepting, and honest.
- ✔ Keep the session moving:
  - Be organized.
  - Encourage students to help develop tutoring sessions.
  - Capitalize on teachable moments.
  - Only correct important mistakes.
  - Know when to quit.
- ✔ Share your enjoyment of reading and writing:
  - Talk about your own reading and writing.
  - Talk about the stories the student reads and writes.

Principle 2: Scaffold student learning

- ✔ Model and explain:
  - Demonstrate ways to solve problems.
  - Acknowledge that it's okay to not fully comprehend an author's meaning, but that to pursue meaning is important.
- ✔ Give the right amount of help:
  - Use questioning strategies to facilitate students' own learning.
  - Help students know what they know.

TIPSHEET

Read Aloud to Children

Why?

- ☐ To enjoy books with children.
- ☐ To expand children's language and knowledge.
- ☐ To demonstrate good reading.

What?

- ☐ Choose books that have appeal.
- ☐ Choose books that you can read in one sitting.
- ☐ Vary books, from favorites to those that introduce new words and ideas.

How?

- ☐ Sit beside the children.
- ☐ Be sure children can see pictures and print.
- ☐ Share conversation and ask questions while reading.
- ☐ Let children turn pages, repeat words, point out letters, and look for detail in pictures.
- ☐ Make books come alive — dance, draw, dress up, or act out the story.

Adapted from: Pinnell, G. & Fountas, I. (1997). *Coordinator's guide to help America read: A handbook for volunteers.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

TIPSHEET

Helping Children Write

Why?

- To enable children to write for themselves.
- To give them a process for communicating their ideas in writing.
- To help them learn more about being a writer each time they write.

What?

- Write for a variety of purposes.

How?

- Help children think about what they want to say.
- Value children's illustrations.
- Encourage the use of references and resources.
- Encourage children to take risks.
- Help them write the parts of words they know.
- Help them check their writing.
- Don't insist that everything be perfect.
- Help them relate new words to more familiar words.
- Encourage children to read and reread what they write.

Adapted from: Pinnell, G. & Fountas, I. (1997). *Coordinator's guide to help America read: A handbook for volunteers.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

TIPSHEET

Benefits of Literacy Tutoring

10 Ways Literacy Tutoring Helps	Benefits to Children
1. **Talking with Children:** the tutor engages in meaningful conversation.	Expands children's conversational abilities, vocabulary, and confidence.
2. **Reading Aloud to Children:** the tutor selects good books to share with children.	Expands children's knowledge of stories and the language of books.
3. **Reading with Children:** the tutor and children read a book together, following the print by pointing.	Gives children a chance to behave like readers and to learn important early aspects of reading.
4. **Helping Children Read on Their Own:** the tutor listens to children read aloud.	Gives children opportunities to read aloud to a supportive audience.
5. **Writing for Children:** the tutor talks to children and writes what they want to say, demonstrating the process.	Provides help so that children can participate in producing messages before they can write.
6. **Interactive Writing with Children:** the tutor and children jointly produce the written message.	Gives children the chance to share in producing writing and learning about letters and words.
7. **Helping Children Write on Their Own:** the tutor observes the children write a message and assists when needed.	Provides support and encouragement for children to produce their own writing.
8. **Understanding Phonics, Letters, Sounds, and Words:** the tutor develops children's skills related to recognizing letters, relating letters to sounds, and analyzing words for reading and writing.	Helps children focus on the skills they need to learn about reading and writing.
9. **Making Books:** the tutor uses all the above techniques to help children construct their own books.	Gives children joy and pride in their abilities to read and write.
10. **Making Connections with Homes:** the tutor works informally by assigning reading and writing homework children can do with their parents.	Helps parents better understand what their children are learning and accomplishing.

Adapted from: Pinnell, G. & Fountas, I. (1997). *Coordinator's guide to help America read: A handbook for volunteers.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

FACTSHEET

Common Reading Problems

Things to help diagnose reading problems and target remediation:

Reading Skills	Associated Problems
1. Print concepts	Students have difficulty with the fundamental aspects of reading and literacy, such as where to start reading the book, reading text from left to right, and the difference between a word and a whole sentence.
2. Decoding words	Students have difficulty understanding the phonetic sounds of letters and how to blend them so that they connect to make words.
3. Memory	Students have difficulty recalling information from one page to the next, or one day to the next.
4. Tracking	Students have difficulty visually following one word to the next and one line of text to the next.
5. Fluency	Students have difficulty reading smoothly and placing emphasis and inflection on appropriate syllables, words, or phrases.
6. Comprehension	Students have difficulty understanding what has been read.

FACTSHEET

Reasons to Learn to Read

Reading lets us do the following:

- ☐ Understand the content of books, newspapers, and magazines.
- ☐ Complete school work.
- ☐ Enjoy literary art forms.
- ☐ Write letters.
- ☐ Locate numbers in the telephone directory.
- ☐ Follow a map.
- ☐ Fill out tax forms.
- ☐ Fill out job, apartment, or credit card applications.
- ☐ Develop marketable skills.
- ☐ Pass the driver's exam.
- ☐ Follow recipes.
- ☐ Interpret monthly bills.
- ☐ Vote intelligently.
- ☐ Shop wisely.
- ☐ Use prescription medications.
- ☐ Understand menus.
- ☐ Know our legal rights.
- ☐ Read to children.

FACTSHEET

Effective Tutoring Sessions

What it takes to make tutoring sessions successful and fun:

- Make a brief outline for each session.
- Plan for a variety of activities.
- Have materials organized before meeting with students.
- Include reading, writing, and speaking.
- Make sure students are actively engaged.
- Keep the pace lively.
- Make sure students are successful, and not struggling, with their activities.
- Record notes about each session.
- Offer students authentic praise for their efforts and accomplishments.

Adapted from: Pinnell, G. & Fountas, I. (1997). *Coordinator's guide to help America read: A handbook for volunteers.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

TIPSHEET

Effective Ways to Tutor English Learners

Things that make tutoring English learners successful and fun:

- Value diversity and know something about the students' languages and cultures.
- Learn to speak a few words in the students' native languages, such as *please*, *thank you*, *hello*, *good-bye*, and *book*.
- Encourage conversation even if students know very little English.
- Build upon what students say by making additional comments so that they can hear new language.
- Read to students from a wide range of picture books and talk together about them.
- Invite students to join in reading aloud when they know words or phrases in the book.
- Use pictures, props, costumes, and performance to make language more meaningful.

Adapted from: Pinnell, G. & Fountas, I. (1997). *Coordinator's guide to help America read: A handbook for volunteers.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

TIPSHEET

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Investigating Read-Aloud Books

Things to point out when reading aloud:

- ☐ Cover and title of the book
- ☐ Author and illustrator names
- ☐ Size and shape of the book
- ☐ End pages
- ☐ Dedication
- ☐ First and last word of the book
- ☐ Interesting use of words
- ☐ Special characters
- ☐ Illustrations
- ☐ Humorous, interesting, and important parts of the story

Adapted from: Pinnell, G. & Fountas, I. (1997). *Coordinator's guide to help America read: A handbook for volunteers.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

TIPSHEET

Designing a Shelter-Based Tutoring Program

Things to consider in designing effective shelter-based tutoring programs:

1. Set up a quiet, safe, well-lit place to meet.
2. Work with one student at a time if possible.
3. Design tutoring sessions to support classroom instruction.
4. Build on student strengths and interests.
5. Use a variety of instructional strategies.
6. Include reading, writing, and speaking.
7. Target learning areas that need strengthening.
8. Ensure communication among shelter tutors, school tutors, teachers, and parents.
9. Plan each session in advance and come prepared with materials.
10. Record notes about the strengths and limitations of each session.
11. List points to remember for next time.
12. Schedule your next tutoring session.
13. Keep a lively pace.
14. Communicate progress to parents.
15. Offer honest praise to students about their efforts and accomplishments.

TIPSHEET

Recruiting Tutors

Characteristics of Successful Tutors

- Energetic
- Committed
- Enjoy children and youth
- Comfortable with shelter life
- Patient
- Nonjudgmental
- Enjoy reading and writing
- Willing to be trained
- Good communicators
- Dependable
- Believe all children are capable of learning

Where to Find Volunteers

- Retired teachers' associations
- Senior citizen living communities, social clubs, or volunteer service organizations
- Colleges and universities
- Businesses and industries
- High schools
- Churches, mosques, and synagogues
- Public libraries
- School parents and grandparents
- Social service and volunteer organizations

Recruitment Suggestions

- Prepare and distribute a one-page flyer describing the volunteer program.
- Make presentations at school, social, civic, and governmental meetings.
- Make telephone calls to individuals and businesses.
- Use listservs and Web recruitment.
- Place notices in newsletters and local newspapers.
- Make announcements on local television and radio stations.
- Tap local faith communities.

TIPSHEET

Supporting Tutors

Training and supervision for effective tutoring should include information about the following:

1. What children experiencing homelessness are like:
   - Overview of child development and the impact of poverty and homelessness on children's development
   - Learning theory
   - Building trusting relationships

2. Getting to know families:
   - Creating learning partnerships with families
   - Sharing information about children's progress
   - Respecting diversity

3. The tutoring approach:
   - Using effective practices
   - Individualizing instruction
   - Coordinating tutoring sessions with the school curriculum
   - Assessing, tracking, and praising student progress

4. Supporting tutors:
   - Ongoing skills-based training in content, instruction, and behavior
   - Material resources
   - Supervision that includes observation and feedback, and review of reflection journals

5. Working as a team:
   - Making referrals, as appropriate
   - Following the tutoring program's policies and procedures
   - Handling problem situations
   - Coordinating with the tutoring program's partners

Adapted from: Koralek, D. & Collins, R. (1997). *On the road to reading: A guide for community partners.* Washington, DC: The Corporation for National Service.

TIPSHEET

Activities That Enrich Literacy

Ideas for tutors and other shelter or school volunteers:

1. **Family Stories:** Use prompting questions to have students tell stories that involve relatives as featured characters in real or fictional accounts that can be illustrated, written, or retold.

2. **Teddy Bear Journaling:** A stuffed bear can be an after-school literacy companion if it comes outfitted with a reading bag that contains a writing book, journal, pencil, crayons, and favorite books. Encourage students to write about adventures with their families and to involve parents in sharing stories, also.

3. **The Writer's Suitcase:** Fill a plastic folder shaped like a suitcase with paper, pencils, envelopes, stencils, stickers, other art and writing supplies, and a note to parents suggesting ways to read and write with their children.

4. **Laugh Together:** Read comic strips together, then invent new adventures for the characters: cut out the frames, write new captions, and re-sequence the new story.

5. **Newspaper Hunting:** Use newspapers and have students circle pronouns and use the context of the sentence to match the pronoun to the noun, identify compound words, guess the meaning of new vocabulary, and talk about how words and pictures go together.

6. **The 5 Ws:** Explain to students that news stories tell about who, what, when, where, and why. Have students identify the 5 Ws in newspaper articles. Have students use the 5 Ws to tell or write a story about something that happened at school.

7. **A Scavenger Hunt:** Create a list of things for students to find in newspapers and magazines, such as a picture of a famous person, a number greater than 10, a map, a picture of an animal, an advertisement, a story with three paragraphs, the name of a store, the name of a state or city, or an article about children.

TIPSHEET

Activities That Enrich Mathematics

Ideas for tutors and other shelter or school volunteers:

1. **Measuring Cups:** Use measuring cups to fill same-size glasses and different-shaped containers with water and play guessing games to encourage comparison, estimation, volume, and thinking about measurement. Have students use measuring cups filled with sand or uncooked rice or popcorn to pour the substance into different-size measuring cups and explore whole numbers and fractions and estimate quantities.
2. **Coin Count:** Have students use an assortment of coins to make 10 cents, 25 cents, 30 cents, a dollar, etc. to learn the value of coins.
3. **Budgeting:** Give students the grocery section of a newspaper and a budget. Have them develop a shopping list and then shop for items by staying within a budget. Give students coupons to help them stay within their budgets.
4. **Squash the Box and Bam the Can:** Have students draw three-dimensional shapes with boxes or cans as models. Then flatten the models and have students draw the two-dimensional shapes. What do they notice about the drawings?
5. **Symmetry:** Have students fold a blank piece of paper in half, draw a shape on the folded paper that incorporates the fold, and cut it out to see the symmetrical figure. Have them decorate one side of the fold and match it symmetrically on the other side.
6. **Tracking Time:** Have students keep track of the amount of time they eat, sleep, watch television, play, attend school, and read in a given day or week. Encourage students to analyze the information and present it in an organized way using graphs, pie charts, or tables.
7. **Weighing In:** Have students use a scale to weigh everyday objects and practice estimation and measurement skills.
8. **Play Games:** "I'm thinking of a number between 1 and 100." Have students ask questions such as, "Is it more than 50?" "Less than 25?" "Even?" "Odd?" until they guess the correct number. "I have three coins in my hand, and they're worth seven cents. What are they?" Have students calculate a nickel and two pennies. "4XU576." Call out the license plate numbers of passing cars, and have students add the numbers in their heads.

TIPSHEET

Mini-lessons for Emergent Readers

- Read books from the top to the bottom.
- Print goes from the left to the right.
- The front cover has the title and author.
- The words are made up of sounds.
- The words must make sense.
- The words often go with the pictures on the page.
- Words that look alike often sound alike.
- A particular letter makes a particular sound.
- Sometimes parts of words like *-ing* and *-ed* sound the same.
- Words that start with the same letter often start with the same sound.
- Words with endings that look alike often sound alike.
- You can write words by listening to the sounds as you say them.
- Stories make sense.
- You can make lists of words to help you remember things.
- You can leave notes when you will not see the person.
- Newspapers can tell us what happens in the world.
- Menus tell the choices of what to eat.

Adapted from Roller, C. (1998). *So...what's a tutor to do?* Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

TIPSHEET

Activities for Emergent Readers

Reading Easy Books

1. Student chooses a book.
2. Student reads the book.
3. Student and tutor talk about the book either before, during, or after reading.

Reading More Challenging Books

1. Student chooses a book from tutor's selection.
2. Tutor introduces the title and cover, asks student to predict storyline.
3. Student reads the book with tutor's support.

Writing

1. Student decides what to write about.
2. Student writes a draft using temporary spelling.
3. Student and tutor edit the writing.
4. Student writes final copy.

Mini-lesson

1. Tutor introduces a lesson based on the student's recent performance.
2. Tutor demonstrates and explains the lesson.
3. Tutor invites student comments and questions.
4. Tutor follows up on lesson in actual reading.

Reading beyond a Student's Reading Ability

1. Student chooses a book.
2. Tutor reads the book aloud to the student.

Adapted from Roller, C. (1998). *So...what's a tutor to do?* Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

TIPSHEET

Choral Reading

A technique for working with emergent readers:

1. Sit next to the student.
2. Hold the book together.
3. Have the student read along with you.
4. Use a slightly louder and slightly faster voice than the student.
5. As the student gains confidence, soften and slow your voice.
6. Praise the student for reading.

TIPSHEET

Early Reading and Writing Development

Children develop basic reading and writing skills in phases:

Storybook Reading Developmental Phases:

1. Attending to pictures but not forming stories
2. Attending to pictures and forming oral stories
3. Attending to a mix of pictures, reading, and storytelling
4. Attending to print but forming stories
5. Attending to print but occasionally using pictures and storytelling
6. Reading conventionally

Writing Developmental Phases:

1. Using drawing for writing
2. Scribble writing
3. Using letter-like forms
4. Using well-learned units or letter strings
5. Using invented spelling
6. Writing conventionally

Adapted from Roller, C. (1998). *So...what's a tutor to do?* Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

FACTSHEET

Commonly Used Comprehension Strategies

Have students try the following comprehension strategies:

- Regularly ask yourself, "Does this make sense?"
- Predict what will come next.
- Check predictions to see if you are right.
- Reread to see if that helps you to better understand.
- Read ahead to see if the author gives information that will help you.
- Ask yourself why the author is giving you this information.
- Draw comparisons between the text and your own life.
- Connect new information in the text to what you already know.
- See if an unfamiliar word may be related to a word that you know.
- Try to state the author's major point.
- Explain why the author is using this order to present information.
- Substitute a known word that makes sense for an unknown word.
- Find the connections between drawings or tables and text.
- Ask yourself how current information relates to earlier information.

Adapted from Roller, C. (1998). *So... What's a Tutor to Do?* Newark. DE: International Reading Association.

FACTSHEET

A Learning-Styles Inventory for Tutors

What are the best ways for your students to learn? Ask them!

How do you learn?	A Lot	Some	Not at All
1. Working with my hands			
2. Learning in a group			
3. Listening to explanations			
4. Reading by myself			
5. Learning from television, videos, films			
6. Seeing something			
7. Using a computer			
8. Listening to speeches			
9. Listening and taking notes			
10. Doing worksheets			
11. Having someone give me examples			
12. Having someone show me			
13. Doing something over and over			
14. Working with another student			
15. Doing homework			
16. Explaining something to someone else			
17. Asking questions			
18. Listening to a lecture			
19. Learning under pressure of a deadline			
20. Memorizing			
21. Learning on my own			

Adapted from Wikelund, K. & Conklin, N. (1989). *Takin' it to the streets: Basic skills training for street youth. A manual for volunteer tutors.* Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

TIPSHEET

Family Reading and Writing Activity

Audience: Teachers and/or tutors

Purpose: Participants learn an approach for inviting parents to share books with their children.

Preparation:

1. Collect a number of easy reading books that children can read with their parents.
2. Make a copy of the two sample Parent-Child Book Activities on pages 171 and 172 and the Parent-Child Book Activity Template on page 173 for each participant.

Equipment and Materials:

Handouts

Books

Procedure:

1. Have participants work in pairs to select a book and write a parent-child activity to go with it. Point out the need to control the reading level and to make the directions absolutely clear. Note that the sample activities never ask children to answer test-like questions; the goal is for parents and children to enjoy time spent together.
2. Bring the groups together and invite participants to share the activities they have written.
3. Encourage participants to make a collection of these activities, develop more, and use them.

Time: Approximately 90 minutes

Parent-Child Book Activity #1

***The Cat in the Hat*, by Dr. Seuss**

Dear Parent,

Please read *The Cat in the Hat* with your child. It is a funny story that we hope you will both enjoy.

Before you read together, ask your child to look at the cover and predict what might happen in the story. As you read, see if any parts of the prediction come true.

Activity

1. Read the story again. Help your child listen for words that rhyme. Have your child point to pictures of words that rhyme. Help your child find some of the written words that rhyme.
2. Have your child draw a picture of his or her favorite part of the story.

Parent-Child Book Activity #2

***Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* by Bill Martin**

Dear Parent,

Please read *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* with your child. It is a book your child will want to join in reading every time the words "Brown Bear, Brown Bear, what do you see?" are repeated.

Before you read together, ask your child to look at the cover and predict what the bear might see in the story. As you read, see if any parts of the prediction come true.

Activity

1. Read the story again. Then have your child retell it to you.
2. Have your child draw the animals he or she liked best in the story. Help your child write the animal names.
3. Talk about some animals that live on farms and some that live in the wild. Talk about which animals could be pets and which could not be.

Parent-Child Book Activity Template

Book Title, *by Author*

Dear Parent,

Activity:

1.

2.

3.

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Linking Families to Your School

Audience: School personnel

Purpose: Participants identify what's in place and what's needed to link families to the school, given the five most common challenges: time and resource constraints, lack of information and training, school structures that impede involvement, school-family differences, and lack of support from community organizations.

Preparation: Make a copy of the Linking Families to Your School worksheet on page 175 for each participant.

Equipment and Materials: Handouts

Procedure:

1. Have participants work in small groups or as a whole group to complete the worksheet.
2. Facilitate a discussion about actions that can be taken to address what's needed to more effectively link families to your school.

Time: Approximately one-half hour

Linking Families to Your School

What's already in place...	What's needed...
To overcome time and resource constraints	
1.	1.
2.	2.
To provide information and training to parents and school staff	
1.	1.
2.	2.
To restructure schools to support family involvement	
1.	1.
2.	2.
To bridge school-family differences	
1.	1.
2.	2.
To tap external supports for partnerships	
1.	1.
2.	2.

Assessing Your Tutoring Program

Audience: School personnel

Purpose: Participants can use the assessment tool to plan a tutoring program or to assess one that is in place.

Preparation: Make a copy of the Assessing Your Tutoring Program worksheet on page 177 for each participant.

Equipment and Materials:

Handouts

Large writing surface that everyone can see, marker or chalk

Procedure:

1. If you are using the assessment tool to plan a tutoring program, have the whole group work together to complete the action steps (skip the columns identifying program strengths/weaknesses).

   If you are using the assessment tool to assess your current tutoring program, have participants work in small groups to complete the form.

2. Facilitate a discussion about how to begin taking the actions indicated by the group.

Time: Approximately one-half to one hour

Assessing Your Tutoring Program

Elements of an effective tutoring program	What are your program's strengths?	What needs strengthening?	Action steps
A safe and accessible place to meet			
Qualified tutors			
Ongoing training and supervision of tutors			
Well-planned sessions			
Sessions that support classroom instruction			
A program rich in reading, writing, and speaking			
Instruction targeted to learning needs			
Frequent and regular sessions			
Regular attendance			
Quality resource and reference materials			
Respect for diversity of lifestyle, culture, and learning styles			

Parent Involvement Program Assessment

Audience: Parents, community members, and school staff

Purpose: Participants will assess their school community's parent involvement efforts and identify areas of strength and areas that can be improved.

Preparation: Make a copy of the Parent Involvement Program Assessment on pages 179–182 for each participant.

Equipment and Materials:

Handouts

Large writing surface that everyone can see, marker or chalk

Procedure:

1. Have individuals or pairs complete the assessment. Point out that there are six parts to Section I (A–F) and explain how participants will figure a rating number for each part.
2. Bring the group together and have each participant or pair report their ratings. Record these on a chalkboard or large chart.
3. Facilitate a discussion of what the ratings signify — the areas of strength and how they can be sustained, and areas that need strengthening and strategies for doing so.

Time: Approximately 2 hours

Parent Involvement Program Assessment

SECTION I

A. Climate and Setting	**Low**				**High**
1. Parents are greeted warmly and courteously when they visit or phone the school.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The school has an "open-door" policy, so parents feel welcome at any time during the school day.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Parents know where to go with their concerns and questions.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Directions and signs are clearly posted so it is easy for visitors to find their way around the school.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The school maintains a parent resource center and/or VIP (very important parent) room.	1	2	3	4	5
Add ratings for questions 1 – 5, and divide by 5: _____					

B. Parent Involvement Program Administration	**Low**				**High**
6. The school administration views parent involvement as a valuable component of the instructional program.	1	2	3	4	5
7. All other staff view parent involvement as a valuable component of education.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Promoting effective parent involvement is the responsibility of all staff members.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The school has a written policy that details the parent involvement program and activities.	1	2	3	4	5
10. The school has a procedure through which conflicts between parents and staff can be resolved.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Instructional staff are aware of the goals for parent involvement in the school.	1	2	3	4	5
12. School staff are fully aware of the importance of parents' involvement in the education of their children.	1	2	3	4	5
13. The school has a parent handbook that is given to all parents.	1	2	3	4	5
14. The parent involvement program provides an orientation for new students and their families.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Parents are involved in revising or developing new school policies.	1	2	3	4	5
Add ratings for questions 6 – 15, and divide by 10: _____					

C. Communication and Flow of Information	**Low**				**High**
16. Parents are fully informed about the academic progress of their children.	1	2	3	4	5
17. All parents are informed of the goals and objectives of the school's instructional program.	1	2	3	4	5

18. The school requires one or more parent-teacher conferences each year for each student.	1 2 3 4 5
19. Parent contacts (e.g., open house, workshops, meetings, teacher conferences) are scheduled throughout the year.	1 2 3 4 5
20. Parent requests for information are readily addressed.	1 2 3 4 5
21. Dates, times, and places of meetings are established for the convenience of parents.	1 2 3 4 5
22. Teachers can meet with parents who cannot come to school during regular school hours.	1 2 3 4 5
23. Parents are informed about the responsibilities of the school staff as well as their own responsibilities within the instructional program.	1 2 3 4 5
24. The instructional staff initiate opportunities to meet parents and know them by name.	1 2 3 4 5
25. School policies encourage all teachers to communicate frequently with parents.	1 2 3 4 5
Add ratings for questions 16 – 25, and divide by 10: _____	

D. Participation, Training, and Support	**Low**	**High**
26. Orientation materials, training guides, and other support documents about parent involvement are prepared in advance and are provided to parents.	1 2 3 4 5	
27. Parents are invited to school to observe lessons and other instructional activities.	1 2 3 4 5	
28. Parents from all communities represented in the school are fully involved in activities at the school.	1 2 3 4 5	
29. Parents are used as aides or volunteers.	1 2 3 4 5	
30. Parents are involved in social, fund-raising, and appreciation activities.	1 2 3 4 5	
31. There are opportunities for parents to be involved in evening and weekend events.	1 2 3 4 5	
32. Parents have the opportunity to advise school officials on the needs, design, implementation, and evaluation of the instructional program.	1 2 3 4 5	
33. Parent meetings, workshops, and agenda topics are based on parent needs and concerns.	1 2 3 4 5	
34. A variety of strategies are used to recruit new parents and to maintain the participation of veteran parents.	1 2 3 4 5	
35. The linguistic needs of non- or limited-English-speaking parents are identified.	1 2 3 4 5	
36. Parents are involved in developing the school plan.	1 2 3 4 5	
37. Translations of written material and interpreters at meetings or other gatherings are available as necessary.	1 2 3 4 5	
38. All parents are invited to an annual meeting during which instructional programs and activities are explained.	1 2 3 4 5	

39. School personnel are made aware of the positive effects that parent involvement can have on increasing pupil achievement, staff morale, and public awareness of program accomplishments and needs.	1 2 3 4 5
40. Materials (e.g., policies, training documents) are developed in clear format and language that can be understood by all parents.	1 2 3 4 5
41. Parents are offered training opportunities to build a stronger home-school partnership.	1 2 3 4 5
42. Teachers are offered the opportunity to participate in training activities to build a stronger home-school partnership.	1 2 3 4 5
43. The school offers assistance to help parents with baby-sitting, transportation, or other needs so that they may attend school events.	1 2 3 4 5
44. Teachers are provided staff development on the topic of effective parent involvement strategies.	1 2 3 4 5
45. The school or program offers volunteer opportunities for parents in a variety of areas, including jobs that can be done at home or on weekends.	1 2 3 4 5
Add ratings for questions 26 – 45, and divide by 20: _____	

E. Home Learning Activities	**Low** **High**
46. Parents are given the opportunity to receive training so they may assist with home learning activities.	1 2 3 4 5
47. Books, worksheets, and education activities are regularly sent home during the school year.	1 2 3 4 5
48. Education activities, such as summer learning kits, home reading, and activity calendars, are prepared for use by parents over the summer.	1 2 3 4 5
49. Communications with parents such as newsletters and student progress reports include activities for parents to do with children at home in their native language.	1 2 3 4 5
50. Parents are informed periodically about their child's activities in class and are told how they can support these activities at home.	1 2 3 4 5
Add ratings for questions 46 – 50, and divide by 5: _____	

F. Evaluation	
51. Evaluation of parental involvement is included in the overall evaluation of the instructional program.	1 2 3 4 5
52. The effectiveness of the parent involvement program is assessed on an annual basis with the assistance of parents.	1 2 3 4 5
53. The results of the annual assessment are used to modify the parent involvement program.	1 2 3 4 5
54. Multiple methods of assessment (e.g., focus groups, interviews, observations) are used to assess the parent involvement program.	1 2 3 4 5
Add ratings for questions 51 – 54, and divide by 4: _____	

Parent Involvement Program Assessment

SECTION I SUMMARY

Program Elements	Average Rating
A. Climate and Setting	
B. Parent Involvement Program Administration	
C. Communication and Flow of Information	
D. Participation, Training, and Support	
E. Home Learning Activities	
F. Evaluation	

1) What do the ratings tell you about areas that need improvement?

SECTION II

1) Describe three to five parent involvement strategies that have worked particularly well at your school or program.

2) Describe three to five barriers to effective parent involvement at your school.

Adapted from: *Parent involvement self-assessment tool.* Northern California Comprehensive Assistance Center. San Francisco: WestEd.

Chapter 5: Planning Presentations and Workshops

The keys to improving the educational success of children without homes are to increase community awareness about homelessness and to train teachers and others to use promising and effective educational practices.

What follows is a sampling of 20 training agendas drawn from materials and activities included in *Imagine the Possibilities.* The agendas can be used as models from which to tailor site-specific agendas to meet the information needs and learning styles of various communities. For those short on time, these agendas are ready-to-use training tools that structure presentations, workshops, awareness campaigns, family involvement programs, school and community partnerships, and fund-raising events.

Some of the agendas draw from materials and information presented in a single chapter. Others draw from across chapters. There are samples for both short (up to one hour) and long (from one to several hours) presentations or workshops, and for audiences ranging from those knowing very little about homelessness to those well-informed but wanting direction about specific topics or classroom strategies. Suggested materials can be used as overheads, handouts, or developed into interactive activities. Those activities already provided are intended to be interactive and facilitated, but they can be modified to fit different training needs and time limitations.

Understanding Family Homelessness
Agenda 1: Short

Overheads and Handouts **Page**

All Children Have Basic Needs ____ 10
Who Is a Homeless Student ____ 12
According to the McKinney-Vento Act ____ 13
Rights ____ 14
Experiencing Homelessness ____ 21
Signs of Homelessness ____ 19
What Schools Can Do ____ 27

Understanding Family Homelessness
Agenda 2: Long

Overheads and Handouts **Page**

All Children Have Basic Needs ____ 10
Who Is a Homeless Student ____ 12
Rights ____ 14
How Homelessness Happens to Families ____ 16
How Homelessness Happens to Youth ____ 17
Where Homeless Children Sleep ____ 18
Signs of Homelessness ____ 19
Questions for School Personnel to Consider ____ 23
Myths and Facts about Homelessness ____ 25
What Schools Can Do ____ 27

Activities

Where Do the Children Sleep? ____ 34
How Can We Support Homeless Children? ____ 41
Designing a Brochure for Parents ____ 30
Planning a Visit to a Homeless Shelter ____ 44

Overcoming Barriers to Educating Homeless Students
Agenda 3: Short

Overheads and Handouts **Page**

The Role of School ____ 54
Attendance Requirements and Eligibility ____ 55
Rights and Responsibilities ____ 56
School Attendance ____ 58
Key Provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act ____ 62
McKinney-Vento Act ____ 63

Activity

Providing for Basic Needs ____ 69

Overcoming Barriers to Educating Homeless Students
Agenda 4: Long

Overheads and Handouts **Page**

The Role of School ____ 54
Attendance Requirements and Eligibility ____ 55
Rights and Responsibilities ____ 56
School Attendance ____ 58
School Placement ____ 59
Transportation ____ 61
Key Provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act ____ 62
McKinney-Vento Act ____ 63

Activities

How Does Your School Eliminate Barriers? ____ 67
Providing for Basic Needs ____ 69
Taking Action ____ 73

Awareness and Overcoming Barriers
Agenda 5: Short

Overheads and Handouts **Page**

All Children Have Basic Needs ____ 10
Who Is a Homeless Student ____ 12
Rights ____ 14
Experiencing Homelessness ____ 21
Attendance Requirements and Eligibility ____ 55
Rights and Responsibilities ____ 56
School Attendance ____ 58
Key Provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act ____ 62
McKinney-Vento Act ____ 63

Activity

Providing for Basic Needs ____ 69

Awareness and Overcoming Barriers
Agenda 6: Long

Overheads and Handouts **Page**

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Attendance Requirements and Eligibility ____ 55
Rights and Responsibilities ____ 56
School Attendance ____ 58
Key Provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act ____ 62
McKinney-Vento Act ____ 63

Activities

Where Do the Children Sleep? ____ 34
How Can We Support Homeless Children? ____ 41
How Does Your School Eliminate Barriers? ____ 67
Providing for Basic Needs ____ 69
Taking Action ____ 73

Effective Classroom Practices for Homeless Students
Agenda 7: Short

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"If they don't learn the way we teach..." 92
25 Things Teachers Can Do for Homeless Students 94
Curriculum 95
Instruction 96
Homework 98
Classroom Assessment 99
Student Reactions to Conditions of Homelessness and How Educators Can Respond 108

Effective Classroom Practices for Homeless Students
Agenda 8: Long

Overheads and Handouts **Page**

"At a time when traditional structures..." 88
"If they don't learn the way we teach..." 92
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Curriculum 95
Instruction 96
Homework 98
Classroom Assessment 99
Student Reactions to Conditions of Homelessness and How Educators Can Respond 108

Activities

Assessing Curriculum and Instruction 116
Developing a Report-Card-in-Progress 118
Developing a Weekly Student Self-Evaluation Form 120

Understanding and Dealing with Student Behavior
Agenda 9: Short

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Developing Prosocial Skills ____ 105
When Conflict Occurs, Teachers Can… ____ 107
Homeless Students ____ 115

Making the School a Welcoming Place
Agenda 10: Short

Overheads and Handouts **Page**

Experiencing Homelessness ____ 21
25 Things Teachers Can Do ____ 94
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A School Climate That Is Sensitive to Students Who Are Homeless ____ 110
Creating a School Climate That Fosters Resilience ____ 112

Activity

Developing a Welcoming Mission Statement ____ 122

Welcoming Homeless Families and Increasing Parent Involvement

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"Parent involvement is..." 135
Experiencing Homelessness 21
25 Things Teachers Can Do 94
Student Reactions to Conditions of Homelessness and How Educators Can Respond 108
School Climate 109
A School Climate That Is Sensitive to Students Who Are Homeless 110
Creating a School Climate That Fosters Resilience 112
Ways for Parents to Become Involved 136
Six Types of Parent Involvement 138

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Fostering Resilience

Agenda 12: Long

Overheads and Handouts **Page**

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Promoting School Involvement for Families Experiencing Homelessness
Agenda 13: Short

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"Parent involvement is..." 135
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Promoting School Involvement for Families Experiencing Homelessness
Agenda 14: Long

Overheads and Handouts **Page**

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Ways for Parents to Become Involved 136
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Activities

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Promoting Literacy for Families Experiencing Homelessness
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Experiencing Homelessness ____ 21
Basic Tips for Tutors ____ 148
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The Two Guiding Principles of Tutoring ____ 150
Benefits of Literacy Tutoring ____ 153
Effective Tutoring Sessions ____ 156
Effective Ways to Tutor English Learners ____ 157
Designing a Shelter-Based Tutoring Program ____ 159
Activities That Enrich Literacy ____ 162
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Tutoring Homeless Students
Agenda 17: Long

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Experiencing Homelessness ____ 21
Basic Tips for Tutors ____ 148
Building a Tutoring Relationship ____ 149
The Two Guiding Principles of Tutoring ____ 150
Benefits of Literacy Tutoring ____ 153
Effective Tutoring Sessions ____ 156
Effective Ways to Tutor English Learners ____ 157
Activities That Enrich Literacy ____ 162
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Activities for Emergent Readers ____ 165
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Parent-Community-School: Working Together to Prevent Homeless Families from Falling through the Cracks

Agenda 18: Long

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Ways to Promote Family Literacy ____ 144
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Imagining Possibilities for Social Service Providers

Agenda 19: Long

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Myths and Facts about Homelessness ____ 25
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Imagining Possibilities for Educators
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Experiencing Homelessness ____ 21
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Rights and Responsibilities ____ 56
25 Things Teachers Can Do for Homeless Students ____ 94
Curriculum ____ 95
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Classroom Assessment ____ 99
Student Reactions to Conditions of Homelessness and How Educators Can Respond ____ 108
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How Does Your School Eliminate Barriers? ____ 67
Assessing Curriculum and Instruction ____ 116
Developing a Welcoming Mission Statement ____ 122
Linking Families to Schools ____ 174

Chapter 6: References, Resources, and Curricula

Having access to references and resources helps teachers work effectively with homeless students and helps social service providers understand and support the needs of families in transition and experiencing trauma.

What follows is a compilation of the reference materials that provided the background research for *Imagine the Possibilities*, as well as a selection of children's books, curricula, videos, and online resources that added to the knowledge base represented here.

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Curricula

Getting along with others. (educators, parents, service providers) Boys Town Press, 800/282-6657.

Homelessness: Let's get involved! (educators and service providers) Salisbury Township School District, 610/791-0830.

Housing and homelessness: A teaching guide. (K-12th grades) Housing Now, 202/347-2405.

KIDSTART: Kids can care. (K-12th grades) Pinellas County Cooperative Extension Services, 813/582-2100.

Learning about homeless children, youth, and families: A teaching guide. (K-12th grades) Atlantic Street Center, 206/329-2050.

Life skills for kids: A resource and activity guide for homeless children ages 7-12. (2nd-7th grades) Salem-Keizer Public Schools, 503/399-3000.

Meeting life's challenges: A youth worker's manual for empowering youth and families. (service providers) University of Oklahoma, National Resource Center for Youth Services, 918/585-2986.

On the street where you live. (K-6th grades; 6th-8th grades) Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless, 612/870-7073.

Practical living/Useful skills curricula. (service providers) Institute for Children and Poverty, 212/529-5252.

SRO game. (service providers) Bay Area Homelessness Project, 415/338-1938.

Together in learning curriculum. (parents) Institute for Children and Poverty, 212/529-5252.

Unsheltered lives: Teaching about homelessness in grades K-12. (K-12th grades) Vermont Department of Education, 802/828-2753.

The well-managed classroom. (K-12th grades) Boys Town Press, 800/282-6657.

Videos

A home in between: Designing transitional housing for women and children (color, 13 minutes) National Coalition for Homelessness, 202/737-6445.

Almost home (color, 25 minutes) Fanlight Productions, 800/937-4113.

Don't make me choose (color, 17 minutes) Night Vision Productions, 203/295-3719.

Even you (color, 27 minutes) Project ACT/Cleveland Municipal School District, 216/574-8203.

Faces of homelessness (color, 30 minutes) Massachusetts Department of Education, 617/770-7493.

Finding a home in Fresno Unified School District (color, 11 minutes) Fresno Unified School District, 559/457-3665.

Home less home (color, 70 minutes) Bill Brand Productions, 212/966-6253.

The homeless home movie (color, 87 minutes) Media Visions, 612/827-0174.

Homeless in America (black and white, 12 minutes) National Mental Health Association, 703/684-7722.

Homeless not hopeless (color, 29 minutes) Northeastern Wisconsin, In-School Telecommunications, 800/633-7445.

I want to go home (black and white, 20 minutes) Video Verite, 603/436-3360.

I wish I was a princess (color, 14 minutes) Coleman Advocates for Youth, 415/239-0161.

It was a wonderful life (color, 52 minutes) Filmakers Library, Inc., 212/808-4980.

No place called home (color, 26 minutes) Ecufilm, 615/242-6277.

Reach for the child (color, 30 minutes) Iowa Department of Education, 515/281-7697.

Rewind: It could have been me (black and white animation, 13 minutes) Morning Glory Films/National Coalition for the Homeless, 202/737-6444.

The Safe Havens Project: Helping teachers and child care providers support children and families who witness violence in their communities (color, 20 minutes) Child Development Media, 800/405-8942.

Shelter boy (color, 15 minutes) Fox Television/National Coalition for the Homeless, 202/737-6444.

Streetlife: The invisible family (color, 58 minutes) Fanlight Productions, 800/937-4113.

Survivors of the streets: Success stories of four who were homeless (color, 28 minutes) Full Circle Productions, 203/255-2094.

What's wrong with this picture? (color, 28 minutes) Fanlight Productions, 800/937-4113.

Online Resources

Action Alliance for Children: http://www.4children.org

Administration for Children and Families: http://www.acf.dhhs.gov

The Better Homes Fund: http://www.tbhf.org

Center for Homeless Education and Information:
http://www.wmpenn.edu/pennweb/ltp/ltp2.html

Children's Defense Fund: http://www.childrensdefensefund.org

Children Now: http://www.childrennow.org

The Health Care for the Homeless Information Resource Center:
http://www.prainc.com/hch

Homes for the Homeless: http://www.HomesfortheHomeless.com

National Alliance to End Homelessness: http://www.naeh.org

National Association of Developmental Disabilities Council:
http://www.igc.apc.org/NADDC

National Center for Children in Poverty: http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/dept/nccp

National Center for Homeless Education at SERVE: http://www.serve.org/nche

National Coalition for the Homeless: http://nch.ari.net

National Health Care for the Homeless Council: http://www.telalink.net/~hch

National Institute for Literacy–Homeless Forum: http://www.novel.nifl.gov

National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty: http://www.nlchp.org

National Parent Information Network: http://www.npin.org

National Runaway Switchboard: http://www.nrscrisisline.org

Stop Family Violence: http://www.famvi.com

U.S. Conference of Mayors Taskforce on Hunger and Homelessness:
http://www.usmayors.org./uscm/homeless/hunger99.pdf

U.S. Department of Education: http://www.ed.gov